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Official Records

First Committee
9th Meeting
Wednesday, 25 October 1995, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdenechuluun . . . . . (Mongolia)

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Hoffmann (Germany), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda items 57 to 81 *(continued)*

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Keating (New Zealand): I should like to convey my congratulations to Mr. Erdenechuluun on his election to the important post of Chairman of the First Committee. He and the members of the Bureau can be assured of our full cooperation over the coming weeks.

This has been a difficult year. The international community has had to think very hard about its security needs. We have taken some difficult decisions and there have, unfortunately, been some grave set-backs. This is a good time to review the situation and lay the groundwork for what will, we hope, be a better year in 1996.

The non-proliferation regime was discussed in depth at the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Important commitments were entered into at that meeting. They must be implemented. The Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament that were adopted in May are the yardstick by which Parties to the NPT will measure progress on non-proliferation and disarmament between now and the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the Review Conference in 1997. We believe that there must be tangible progress in order to build confidence that our shared goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons is achieved. A world without nuclear weapons is achievable but the lesson of the past 12 months is that we must have a concrete strategy for reaching that goal and that we must stick to it.

New Zealand is pleased with the results achieved this year in the comprehensive test-ban treaty (CTBT) negotiations in Geneva. But much remains to be done if the treaty is to be signed in 1996, as was agreed at the NPT Conference. We will be joining our traditional partners, Mexico and Australia, in seeking this Committee's endorsement of a timetable to enable signature by the outset of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly. We believe that the pace of negotiations would be accelerated if China and the Russian Federation were formally to adopt the same welcome position taken by the United States, France and the United Kingdom on the scope of the test ban. We were encouraged to hope from reports about the recent meeting between President Clinton and President Yeltsin that there will indeed be promising developments in this regard. New Zealand believes that complete prohibition of any nuclear explosion, no matter how small, is essential if the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation benefits sought by the international community are to be delivered.

Addressing the Special Commemorative Meeting just three days ago, the New Zealand Prime Minister, Mr. Jim Bolger, reiterated that New Zealand finds it inexplicable and unacceptable that China and France are still testing nuclear weapons. As we move into this final phase of the negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty, such actions, in total disregard of overwhelming international opinion, are of grave concern to New Zealand and indeed to nations in every region of the world.

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The commitments that all Parties to the NPT assumed in May were aimed at a world in which nuclear weapons would be eliminated. Nuclear testing has never been and is not now consistent with that goal. On the contrary, it is a deplorable step backwards, reviving fears that the nuclear-arms race is not over. It sends the wrong message to States that aspire to the possession of nuclear weapons.

New Zealand condemns nuclear testing wherever it occurs. But New Zealand and its South Pacific Forum neighbours have been particularly angered by the resumption of nuclear testing in our region by France. The second nuclear test conducted by France at Fangataufa on 2 October further damaged relations with the countries of the South Pacific Forum and resulted in the suspension of France's status as a "dialogue partner". Calls for China and France to heed international opinion and to end their testing programmes will not cease until testing ceases.

The recent Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement strongly deplored nuclear testing. The General Assembly must also deliver a very strong message. New Zealand, along with a representative group of like-minded States, will shortly submit to this Committee a draft resolution rejecting nuclear testing and demanding that this unacceptable behaviour cease.

An immediate end to nuclear testing and the conclusion by mid-year of the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty would help to restore confidence that the NPT programme of action is back on track. These, however, would only be first steps. When the nations of a whole region freely choose to renounce nuclear weapons for ever, we move closer to our goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. New Zealand therefore warmly congratulates the countries of Africa on the adoption of the Pelindaba Treaty in June. We will join wholeheartedly in the General Assembly's endorsement of the African nuclear-free zone.

Equally, we look forward to the completion of negotiations on a nuclear-free zone in South-East Asia. A nuclear-free Africa and South-East Asia, together with the areas covered by the Treaties of Rarotonga and Tlatelolco and the Antarctic Treaty, open up the possibility of a southern hemisphere free of nuclear weapons.

The respect of the nuclear Powers for such zones is critical to their effectiveness, as the NPT Principles and Objectives now recognize. The recent decision by France, the United States and the United Kingdom to sign the Protocols of the Rarotonga Treaty is thus most welcome. For 10 years, we have been urging those countries to join China and the Russian Federation as signatories. Their decision now to do so is a positive step forward and demonstrates a growing awareness of the strength of the region's feelings.

But we need to do much more. The General Assembly agreed at its forty-eighth session that negotiations to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons should begin. The Conference on Disarmament took responsibility for the negotiations and this April established an Ad Hoc Committee for that purpose under its agenda item dealing with the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament. Indeed, all parties to the NPT are committed to the immediate commencement and early conclusion of cut-off negotiations. This Committee must again endorse these negotiations and urge the Conference to overcome its procedural difficulties and start its work immediately on the basis of document CD/1299 of 23 March 1995.

Furthermore, the establishment by the Conference on Disarmament of an appropriate mechanism to prepare the ground for further multilateral efforts towards the goal of nuclear disarmament would certainly be consistent with the commitment in article VI of the NPT to complete nuclear disarmament. Looking beyond the conclusion of the CTBT and the cut-off negotiations, New Zealand has suggested a ban on the production of nuclear weapons as a further step towards permanently ending the nuclear-arms race.

The importance New Zealand attaches to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament is fully matched by our concerns in the field of conventional weapons. Today's conflicts, and their unacceptable civilian toll, are fuelled by the widespread availability and irresponsible accumulation of conventional armaments.

We believe that the international community must urgently seek remedies to this situation. Greater transparency in military matters and the nurturing of confidence between States are the key elements required for bringing about the regional and global stability which would contribute to reducing excessive and illegal trade in conventional weapons.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is a starting-point. We would like to see universal returns and the provision of background information on military holdings and procurement through national production. We continue to believe that it is necessary to expand the scope of the Register so that the transparency benefits of participation in it are more widely shared.

Transparency would also be better served if more States fulfilled the terms of resolution 40/91 B, in which the General Assembly recommended that all States provide

details of their military expenditures. Document A/50/277 and Add.1 shows how few States are prepared, even now, to give this basic information and how many fewer are prepared to provide a proper breakdown of the total figures. While working to improve global measures, we should not overlook the benefits of building confidence through transparency at the regional level. New Zealand is pleased to be part of the efforts currently under way in the context of the Association of South-East Asian Nations Regional Forum, which held its second ministerial meeting in Brunei recently.

In this context, I need to refer to the problem of landmines, which continue to kill and maim thousands of people every year. It is indictable that at the recent Conference in Vienna it was not possible to achieve agreement on any measures to strengthen the controls on anti-personnel landmines. New Zealand is extremely disappointed at the outcome of the Review Conference. We remain committed to the goal of the elimination of all anti-personnel landmines, and we hope that, notwithstanding the outcome in Vienna, the international community will quickly reach agreement on abolishing these weapons.

However, bringing agreements into effect is just as important as concluding them. In this context, New Zealand continues to attach great importance to the early entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention. So far, 40 States have ratified the Convention, and I am pleased to say that the necessary domestic action to enable New Zealand to ratify it is well advanced. We urge other signatories to place high priority on early ratification to as to enable entry into force to take place, as we hope it to, in 1996. The Preparatory Commission at The Hague will also need to intensify its preparations for the establishment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons over the coming months.

We are pleased with the start that has been made in the ad hoc group to strengthen the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. New Zealand will be working, in particular, for legally binding verification arrangements. We hope that the ad hoc group will be able to secure sufficient meeting time in the coming year to enable it to consider new measures at the next review Conference, in 1996.

Such a full agenda allows for no delays, and it requires responsive and efficient disarmament machinery if we are not to lose the opportunities for progress which are now available. Few would disagree with the proposition that the agenda and machinery inherited from the General Assembly's first special session on disarmament were created for a different era, one of the past. We should not postpone indefinitely the task of readjusting our machinery. Reform of United Nations structures is in the air. The General Assembly has established a High-Level Working Group to look at all areas. The disarmament machinery cannot remain immune from these demands for reform. This Committee, through the thematic discussion we will shortly be having on disarmament machinery, has the opportunity to make a valuable contribution to the deliberations of that Working Group.

What we must avoid at all costs is the carry-over into 1996 of the stalemate which gripped the Conference on Disarmament this year on the questions of its agenda, composition and work methods. Notwithstanding the results produced in the comprehensive test-ban treaty negotiations, the Conference must show itself to be responsive to the international community's expectations that it be accountable for making progress on the full range of substantive disarmament questions. It must also be representative of the international community for which it works.

In this regard, we pay tribute to the current President of the Conference, the Ambassador of Morocco, for his efforts in securing a first important step towards expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. We would remind members of the Conference on Disarmament, however, that they are committed to taking the second step, which is to implement the expansion at the earliest possible date. Given the many years that have elapsed since the last enlargement, this second step should not be delayed beyond the start of the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

Last year, in resolution 49/77 B, the General Assembly reminded the Conference on Disarmament that it was funded under the regular budget and that a more representative membership was essential. It urged that expansion be accomplished early in 1995.

Despite its progress, the Conference on Disarmament has failed to meet the General Assembly's deadline. For too long we have had taxation without representation. As the New Zealand Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade said to the General Assembly in his statement on 28 September this year, this situation remains unsatisfactory. If the status quo continues much longer, a repeat of the Boston Tea Party here in New York is inevitable.

This fiftieth session is more than a time to reflect on past achievements and lessons learned in the field of disarmament and arms control. It is also a time to take stock for the future — to decide what we can do now to secure peace, stability and prosperity in the twenty-first

century — and then to begin to move forward together to achieve those goals.

Mr. Wyzner (Poland): Let me first offer my congratulations to the Chairman on his election to his post at the head of the First Committee at this historic juncture in the annals of the United Nations. As an old friend of his, I know that the profound and extensive experience of multilateral diplomacy and disarmament that he brings to his office will be important assets for our productive deliberations. Both he and you, Mr. Acting Chairman, will have my delegation's full cooperation in the discharge of your important duties. I also wish to add my sincere felicitations to you, Sir, and all the other members of the Bureau.

Since Poland has associated itself with the statement that Spain made on behalf of the European Union, in my intervention today I should like to offer only some remarks of a more general nature.

Several years my mentor, a distinguished member of the International Court of Justice, the late Manfred Lachs, observed that

> "At San Francisco we believed we were setting two objectives on the road to peace: decolonization and disarmament. We thought that decolonization would take at least 50 years, while disarmament we could achieve in a decade. In fact, it turned out to be exactly the other way around."

I am recalling the words of Judge Lachs because, on the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, they remind us that ever since the founding of the Organization — indeed, since the dawn of the nuclear era — disarmament has been among the top priority issues on the United Nations agenda. These words also exemplify how far we have fallen behind the target date we had anticipated at that time.

The fiftieth anniversary session of the United Nations General Assembly is the right moment to take stock of the advances made in the field of arms control and disarmament over the past 50 years. Our debate may highlight not only what has been accomplished but also what is still pending on the disarmament agenda. For decades concern over how to avoid nuclear conflict preoccupied nations. It is no coincidence that the very first resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations, adopted in the wake of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, sought to ban nuclear weapons and ensure the use of nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful ends. Despite continuous United Nations attention, the growing cold-war confrontation pre-empted any chance of success for these early efforts.

The situation was radically changed as the cold war subsided. The disappearance of the bipolar world and the historic transformations that followed its demise ushered in an international climate truly conducive to meaningful disarmament. Two important Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties were signed, followed by the Treaty on the Reduction of Conventional Forces in Europe, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Open Skies Treaty, the Lisbon Protocol and many other agreements. They have all become major political and diplomatic achievements. These accords, momentous as they are, are obviously only the first steps in the right direction — to cut back the worst excesses of the East-West arms race. Even though some of them are not yet fully effective, they have nevertheless contributed to making the world a more stable and secure place in which to live. However, the risk of global nuclear conflict has been replaced by new challenges to stability and security. The classical notion of stability, based upon an equilibrium between two adversarial groups, has undergone a fundamental modification. International security in turn has become multidimensional.

It is against this background that in its foreign policy Poland has been motivated by a strong desire to help to build a new Europe, one without divisions and conflicts, ensuring well-being and security for all — a Europe better prepared to cope with new challenges. This policy translates into unremitting efforts to integrate Poland into the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, in recognition of the role of these bodies as guarantors of security, stability, democracy and the economic development of the continent.

The new challenges, coming in the form of intra-State ethnic or religious conflicts, much too often tend to be characterized by untold violence and unusual cruelty. As we know only too well, the principal victims of the violence nowadays are mostly non-combatant civilians — the young, the old and the infirm. These new challenges do not suggest at all that arms control and disarmament have become irrelevant or that they have no valid role to play in preventing conflicts, reducing the risk of war, strengthening confidence and enhancing international security.

The disarmament tasks ahead are still staggering. Nuclear arsenals have yet to be trimmed of their overkill potential. So, despite the impressive record of disarmament and arms-control accomplishments, sustained efforts, both bilateral and multilateral, continue to be indispensable to the improvement of the global security environment. We must not miss the window of opportunity created by the end

of the cold war. Now is the time to seriously explore issues once deemed intractable. In our view, the United Nations provides the most suitable framework within which to expedite constructive debate on the post-cold-war disarmament agenda.

In that respect, the international community made a highly auspicious beginning last May. The decisions of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to extend the NPT for an indefinite period, to strengthen the process of its future review and to lay down a set of principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament are of historic importance. Their significance cannot be overestimated. They come as an eloquent acknowledgement that after decades of military build-up, the scenario of a nuclear doomsday is beginning to fade from our minds.

The far-sighted resolve to extend the NPT has cemented the principle of non-proliferation into a binding rule of international conduct. A major step has thus been taken to put the nuclear genie back into its bottle. We hope it will be followed soon by further steps. The agenda of unfinished business in the nuclear area is much too long for the international community to be complacent about it.

The most pressing business still pending in that regard is, of course, the completion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. The Committee will recall that the States Parties to the NPT agreed last May, *inter alia*, that 1996 should be the target date for the completion of the ongoing negotiations on that Treaty and that pending its entry into force, the nuclear-weapon States should exercise utmost restraint.

Regrettably, such restraint has not yet been demonstrated by some of the nuclear-weapon Powers. The echo of nuclear tests accentuates the urgency of a test-ban agreement. My country hopes that the test explosions will not slow the pace of the negotiating process. If anything, they must strengthen the determination of the international community to spare neither time nor effort in accelerating the negotiations on the Treaty and to complete them by the target date.

Poland welcomes the progress which the Conference on Disarmament has been able to make so far in these negotiations, especially in 1995. The extent and importance of the progress is reflected in the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly. The rolling text of a draft comprehensive test-ban treaty annexed to the report leaves no doubt that the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, which the representative of Poland, Ambassador Dembinski, has had the privilege of chairing this year, stands a good chance of completing its mandated task on time. Several factors in particular seem to support this belief.

Poland, as well as many other members of the Conference on Disarmament, warmly welcomed the declaration of the President of the French Republic that France would sign the treaty, without any conditions, in the autumn of 1996. The second factor is the combined effect of the formal commitments of the United States, France and the United Kingdom and — as we understand — of the Russian Federation as well, to seek a true "zero-yield" test ban treaty. The fact that these nuclear-weapon Powers have opted for a commitment

> "not to carry out any nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions"

is tantamount to a major breakthrough in the efforts to achieve a comprehensive and internationally verifiable test-ban agreement in the near future.

Like many other members of the international community, Poland is persuaded that such a commitment, supported by all five of the nuclear-weapon States, would add the decisive momentum to efforts aimed at the timely finalizing of the comprehensive test-ban treaty negotiations.

We also find the increasing convergence of views in other key areas of the negotiations most encouraging, notably - verification. An important meeting of minds has emerged concerning the architecture of the future international monitoring system, as well as procedures governing on-site inspection. No less meaningful is the flexibility with which the negotiators have been addressing, *inter alia*, the issue of equitable sharing of costs involved in the implementation of the future treaty. The tendency to adopt an appropriately adjusted United Nations scale of assessments, as the basic principle underlying the financing of the comprehensive test-ban treaty can lead to an acceptable solution.

As the comprehensive test-ban treaty negotiations enter the "end game", it becomes ever more obvious that finalizing the draft treaty by the target date may not be automatic without sustained political will, flexibility and a sense of urgency on the part of all delegations at the negotiating table. From the position of the Chair, Poland will spare no effort to ensure that the short time available between next November and January 1996 shall be put to the best use for the negotiations. We believe that the treaty should be ready for approval by the resumed meetings of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly and that it should be opened for signature — at the latest — in the

autumn of 1996. We note with interest the invitation of Japan to hold the signing ceremony in that country.

As we all know, it was only by default that in 1995 the comprehensive test-ban treaty negotiations received the undivided, priority attention of the Conference on Disarmament. It is regrettable that owing to a dispute over procedure, no other substantive and pressing issue before the Conference on Disarmament could receive the necessary attention this year. This goes for the question of the legitimate aspirations of the non-nuclear-weapon States to obtain satisfactory security assurances. In this respect, Security Council resolution 984 (1995), as well as the unilateral declarations of its five permanent members, could add momentum to a productive debate on the question of negative security assurances.

We deem it even more regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament was unable to address the issue of the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other military purposes, despite the prior agreement of the Conference on Disarmament on the establishment of an appropriate ad hoc committee and on its mandate. We consider it imperative that the Conference on Disarmament proceed with all due dispatch to examine all aspects of "cut-off" - in keeping with the agreed mandate and the relevant General Assembly resolutions. In our view, the overriding interests of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament brook no further delay.

The Government of Poland considers it gratifying that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations coincides with a remarkable success of efforts to proscribe weapons of mass destruction. A major accomplishment of the Conference on Disarmament - the Chemical Weapons Convention - stands out in this regard. Signed by nearly 160 States since it was laid out for signature in Paris in January 1993, it was supposed to enter into force early this year. The slow pace of its ratification obviously holds back its practical application. Poland, which was actively involved in the negotiations of the Convention, was one of the first signatories of that Convention. Last July Poland ratified the Convention and soon thereafter deposited its document of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations - the thirty-fifth signatory State to do so. At this time steps are being taken to prepare national implementation measures to assure strict compliance with the provisions of the Convention.

We are pleased to find States with important and highly developed chemical industries among those that have already ratified the Convention. This fact seems to disprove claims that provisions of the Convention, especially its verification regime, hamper legitimate activities conducted in civilian facilities. We therefore urge those States which have not yet done so to sign the Chemical Weapons Convention without further delay and to open up the process of its ratification at an early date. Accelerated ratification of the Convention would bring it into effect and would support the efforts which the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is undertaking to ensure the strict implementation of that instrument. This call is addressed in the first place to States with substantial stockpiles of chemical weapons. We take note with satisfaction of the important progress made by the Preparatory Commission in the discharge of its difficult tasks, as reported by its Executive Secretary, Mr. Kenyon. Still, we shall not gloss over our concern that attempts are being made to reinterpret some of the key provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Such attempts are clearly incompatible with the Commission's mandate entrusted to under the Paris resolution.

Poland firmly supports efforts to strengthen the 1970 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) by supplementing it with an appropriate verification protocol. The Government of Poland welcomed the initiative to hold a Special Conference of the States Parties to the Convention to consider ways and means of enhancing the effectiveness of that instrument. We fully endorsed its decisions, including the establishment of an Ad Hoc Group of States Parties. We are confident that by the fourth Review Conference of the BWC, in 1996, the Group will make an important breakthrough in its efforts.

To our mind, a legally binding verification protocol, based on the obligation of States Parties to provide mandatory declarations and accept effective on-site inspections, would establish a regime acceptable to all States Parties. Pending agreement in this respect, we believe that it is imperative to enhance international cooperation on a non-discriminatory and equitable basis to promote peaceful applications of biotechnology and to prevent the proliferation of biological weapons.

As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, Professor Bartoszewski observed in his statement in the general debate in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly, the Government of Poland believes that the remarkable disarmament advances in regard to nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction should be paralleled by serious consideration of all aspects of conventional arms. It is no exaggeration to say that conventional arms used in innumerable regional conflicts since the beginning of the nuclear age account for many more victims than have been

claimed by nuclear arms. These weapons have, therefore, to be seriously addressed, in addition to the attention which is being devoted to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Poland, of course, resolutely supports the United Nations Register as an important vehicle for the promotion of greater transparency and confidence in the field of conventional arms. In accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions, Poland has been regularly submitting annual reports to the Register, in the requisite standardized form. We believe, like many other States, that the scope of the Register should be further expanded to cover military holdings and procurement from national production.

My country is gratified that one, albeit fragmentary, aspect of conventional arms, notably anti-personnel land-mines, are currently receiving the increased attention of the international community. The fact that land-mines are so easy to lay, yet so difficult to detect and dangerous to remove, is undoubtedly one of the root causes of the global land-mine crisis so frequently decried in the course of the current session of the General Assembly. According to the often quoted estimates contained in the Secretary-General's report of 1994 (A/49/1), there are more 110 million uncleared land-mines lying in the ground of more than 60 countries worldwide. All of them are probably still in good working order long after hostilities have ended and the combatants have moved away. The land-mine crisis is a global humanitarian crisis which is dramatically deteriorating. There are 2 to 5 million new mines laid each year, against the mere 100,000 that it was possible to clear next year.

Also, in Poland we are trying to cope with the legacy of vast quantities of land-mines and artillery projectiles which date back to the Second World War. For the past 50 years they have been claiming a steady toll of lives and have maimed many people, mostly unsuspecting civilians, often children at play.

It is obvious to us that concerted action by the international community is imperative. It is necessary to deal with the land-mine problem in order - at least - to prevent it from becoming more serious. In response to General Assembly resolutions 48/75 K of 1993 and 49/75 D of 1994, the Government of Poland has declared a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land-mines that do not have self-destruct or self-neutralizing devices. It has also pledged to make an important contribution to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance.

At the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, which ended recently in Vienna, Poland gave its resolute support to efforts to strengthen the Convention, in particular its Protocol II on land-mines. We regret that less progress has been made in that regard than the international community might have expected. We trust that the attention paid at the Conference to the Protocol on land-mines, especially its application to non-international conflicts, will not be in vain and will lead to an appropriate accord soon. Poland has been gratified by the progress, which proved to be possible in Vienna, in respect to Protocol IV on blinding laser weapons.

In the considered view of my delegation, the measures sought in Vienna would stand a greater chance of materialization if and when the Convention obtains universal support. We, therefore, deem it indispensable for the General Assembly to urge the States Members of the United Nations which have not yet done so, to adhere to the Convention and its Protocols, especially Protocol II on land-mines, without further delay.

Poland recognizes the need to enhance the effectiveness of the disarmament mechanisms which the United Nations has at its disposal. At a time when a high premium is placed on their pragmatic, cost-effective and productive functioning, it may be advisable to go beyond the immediate and necessary goal of the rationalization of work and reform of the agenda of this Committee.

Effective measures should be sought to ensure that the United Nations Disarmament Commission can play a truly meaningful role as a body in which important problems of international security are productively addressed at the threshold of the twenty-first century. Poland also finds it regrettable that the effective work of the Conference on Disarmament - the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body - has in 1995 been virtually paralysed in areas other than that of the comprehensive test-ban treaty negotiations. Dating back to the bygone days of the cold war and the bipolar world of adversarial blocs, the Conference on Disarmament today needs to reflect more adequately the global realities in order to cope with the new challenges at the threshold of the new century. It should, *inter alia*, become more representative of the international community today. In this respect, Poland welcomes with satisfaction the first step taken by the Conference on Disarmament to expand its membership by offering it - in principle, if not yet in fact - to 23 States. We are hopeful that another decision will soon follow granting these States the status of fully-fledged, de facto members of that body. Needless to say, we have been of the opinion all along that no arbitrary barriers should be erected to prevent a State

interested in disarmament efforts, and willing to contribute to them, from obtaining membership of the Conference of Disarmament.

Poland is aware of the interest which some States take in the possible convening of another special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in the future. This matter, in our view, should be considered in the light of the heavy calendar of disarmament events already scheduled for the next few years. We need to bear in mind, in particular, the extensive review process with regard to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) which will focus the attention of States parties as of 1997.

We believe, moreover, that the potential which is inherent in the process outlined in the declaration on the Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament - a document unanimously agreed upon at the NPT Review and Extension Conference - should be carefully explored in the context of a debate on the necessary enhancement of United Nations disarmament machinery.

In conclusion, let me stress that Poland is proud of its active role in regard to matters of peace and international security. We have sought to make a meaningful contribution in those areas through our direct involvement in the United Nations peace-keeping missions and multilateral disarmament negotiations. We remain strongly committed to these goals. We shall not shirk our responsibilities in that regard, either today or in the days ahead.

Mrs. Tomová (Slovakia): I should like, on behalf of the Slovak delegation, to congratulate Mr. Erdenechuluun of Mongolia on his election as Chairman of the First Committee in this anniversary year — a very important occasion for the United Nations — and to assure him of the delegation's support in the discharge of his responsible assignment.

We associate ourselves fully with the statement made by the representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries. Slovakia considers it one of the most important duties of the world community to engage in common efforts with regard to disarmament, peaceful operations, global stability and international peace. Today, we can see possibilities for global disarmament that could hardly have been predicted a few years ago. Now that the cold war has ended, super-Power confrontation has been replaced by super-Power cooperation aimed at eliminating weapons of mass destruction. The climate for arms control and disarmament has never been better.

The main achievement of the disarmament agenda this year was undoubtedly the success of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which was agreed to without a vote, promotes stability, confidence and favourable conditions for the non-proliferation regime and nuclear disarmament. It is supposed to be an important step in the process of designing the architecture of global security.

We recognize the indefinite extension of the NPT as a fundamental precondition for positive development and success in the area of nuclear disarmament. The growing number of parties to the NPT is confirmation of States' common interest in, and their political will to achieve the goal of, the elimination of the most dangerous weapons of mass destruction. The Treaty helps to reduce the nuclear threat faced by each and every one of the parties to it, lays the basis for international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and is a promising development in the field of arms control and disarmament.

The Slovak Republic supports the objectives of the NPT with regard to the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, which can be an important contribution to regional and global security. We appreciate the announcement by France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America that they intend to sign the relevant Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga in the first half of 1996.

Achieving universality for the Non-Proliferation Treaty is, we believe, an important precondition for complete nuclear disarmament. Slovakia welcomes the accession of Belarus, Kazakstan, Ukraine and South Africa as non-nuclear-weapon States and their voluntary renunciation of nuclear weapons. Once again we appeal to the small number of States that are still outside the NPT to accede to it.

One aspect of the security of non-nuclear-weapon States is the provision of security assurances against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons. Declarations of the nuclear-weapon States, together with Security Council resolution 984 (1995), represent an important step towards this goal. We hope that such commitments will be followed by an international legal instrument.

Slovakia notes with satisfaction the reaffirmation by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference of the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as a fundamental element of the Treaty which plays an irreplaceable role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and helps to strengthen

mutual confidence. Slovakia fulfils strictly its obligations under the full-scale safeguards agreement with the IAEA. Inspectors from the Agency are not required to obtain a visa to enter Slovakia, and they have free access to any nuclear facility.

We fully support all measures aimed at strengthening the safeguards system with a view to ensuring that nuclear material is used exclusively for peaceful purposes and to avoiding breaches of obligations such as those that occurred in the case of Iraq and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We have been supporting the IAEA Programme "93+2" on strengthening and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system. Slovakia believes that measures aimed at strengthening the safeguards system should be interconnected with effective and transparent multilateral export control and activities intended to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear materials.

We are pleased that the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty have been making progress. As the draft treaty continued to be the main focus of the discussions at the 1995 session of the Conference on Disarmament, Slovakia has expressed its regret at the decision of some nuclear-weapon States to conduct further nuclear-test explosions we consider the nuclear-testing moratorium an important element of the preparations for the Treaty. As Slovakia has advocated that the treaty prohibit all nuclear tests, without exception, we applaud especially the far-sighted decision of France, the United Kingdom and the United States to accept the "zero yield" principle. We note with satisfaction the commitment made by all nuclear-weapon States to sign the comprehensive treaty not later than in 1996.

An inseparable aspect of the nuclear-disarmament issue is a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices — a cut-off treaty. Slovakia profoundly regrets that the Conference on Disarmament failed to meet the requests of the United Nations General Assembly and the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference in this regard.

I am pleased to announce that the Slovak Republic has now joined the family of countries that have ratified the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. We hope that this action will contribute to the global efforts to secure the early entry into force of the Convention. We appreciate the efforts of the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which has been elaborating the practical elements of the Convention. Not only do we have experience but we are ready to contribute to the effective work of the Secretariat and to the training of the Organization's future inspectors.

We consider the Convention to be above all a disarmament treaty. We welcome the Preparatory Commission's initiative of sending an international delegation, known as "the Troika", to Moscow and Washington in order to speed up the process of ratification in these two important countries. We are firmly convinced that the message of the international community has been reflected in a positive way in both capitals. The Slovak Republic fully supports the call of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to complete the process of ratification in the near future so that the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons can begin to fulfil its obligations in regard to the disposal of supplies of chemical agents of war.

The Convention entails more than these purposes. It is also designed for cooperation and assistance in cases of the use or threat of the use of chemical weapons. The recent tragic incident that occurred in Japan proves that terrorists are able to abuse even such barbaric means as poisonous chemical agents. On that account, we perceive the Convention as an instrument that can contribute in a substantial way to the non-proliferation of dangerous agents and prohibit them from falling into the wrong hands. In this respect, the Slovak Republic has enacted the necessary legislation to ensure that the spirit and wording of the Convention will be fulfilled 100 per cent on our part. We are ready to discuss and share our experience in this field.

We are fully convinced that, next year, the General Assembly of the United Nations will be able to welcome a representative of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and to hear a report of the initial results of the work of the Organization. This might be the best example of effectiveness and pragmatism in the implementation of an international treaty on the disposal of a whole category of weapons of mass destruction.

As far as the Biological Weapons Convention is concerned, it is imperative that its verification regime be bolstered in the near future in order to enhance the importance of the Convention. We do hope that this goal will be achieved at the Review Conference next year. Ever since the Convention came into existence, Slovakia has participated actively in the implementation of an effective control of transfers of strategic and sensitive materials and technologies. We consider this one of the ways to assert the principles of a global security policy. This is an opportunity for us to contribute to the control of armaments and thus to convince our partners about Slovakia's active approach and willingness to share the responsibility for the strengthening

of mutual security and cooperation within the international community.

At the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, the Slovak Republic has been in favour of the earliest possible limitation of the availability of anti-personnel land-mines, a considerable strengthening of Protocol II, a substantial increase in the number of States parties to the Convention, and the adoption of Protocol IV.

Slovakia was among the very first countries to respond to the United Nations resolutions on the subject and to introduce an embargo on exports of anti-personnel land-mines. We also highly appreciate the organization of the International Meeting on Mine Clearance held under the auspices of the Secretary-General in Vienna last July. This forum stressed the need for a more active approach to the complex problem of anti-personnel land-mines and their indiscriminate use, which inflicts horrendous casualties upon the civilian population, including innocent children.

The Slovak Republic takes an active part in, and supports, the process of arms control and disarmament both within and outside the framework of the United Nations. We consider the Conference on Disarmament the most appropriate forum in this field. Let me, therefore, reiterate that we continue to believe in our right to fill the seat vacated by the former Czecho-Slovakia; only Slovakia has a legitimate right to assume this seat. Membership in the Conference on Disarmament is of paramount political importance to us. We are fully convinced that linking the issue of filling the vacancy in the Conference with the broader issue of expansion of the membership is unjustifiable. On the other hand, we hope that, besides resolving the specific question of Slovakia, the requirement for expansion of the Conference will be met without delay so that appropriate representativeness of this body can be achieved.

Mr. Guillén (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I would like to join in the congratulations extended to the Chairman on his election to chair the First Committee. I extend those congratulations also to the other members of the bureau. Rest assured that the delegation of Peru will cooperate resolutely with you.

In its foreign policy, Peru has always advocated and insisted on rejecting the production and use of weapons of mass destruction, and has called for a reduction of weapons and for the use of resources which are then released to promote economic and social development. This request falls within the framework of the renewed concept of security and is also aimed at maintaining the stability of legitimately constituted governments now faced with threats which, like drug trafficking and terrorism, can reach regional and world proportions.

Latin America and the Caribbean was one of the first regions to promote these efforts. Since the Treaty of Tlatelolco created the first inhabited zone on the planet free from nuclear weapons, we, the Latin American and Caribbean countries, have adopted initiatives which would make it possible for this region to become one of the most active sources of regional disarmament efforts.

Within the framework of our efforts, Peru feels that there are three elements which must be considered in order to strengthen this regional approach. Firstly, every regional disarmament effort should take into account the specific conditions and characteristics of each region. Secondly, therefore, it should also recognize that there are differing regional levels of progress in the field of disarmament, from adopting measures to promote confidence and security to establishing effective agreements covering all aspects of disarmament and arms limitation. Thirdly, the specific characteristic of each regional situation must be considered. That means that, while it is difficult to transfer disarmament experiences to other regions, there are very important reference points for drafting wide-ranging recommendations which may well be used by all regions interested in or committed to the process of disarmament and which can be adjusted most effectively to their own needs.

Similarly, my delegation feels it necessary to point out that security in the Latin American region is also closely linked to the process of economic and social development and, hence, the need for integral plans for regional security which spell out the social, economic, humanitarian and environmental aspects alongside the military issues.

Within the conceptual framework I have described, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is the primary mechanism for international control of the arms trade. My delegation believes that the Register makes a substantial contribution to the promotion of confidence and that it represents the first step in the process of negotiating on disarmament or arms reduction at the world, regional and subregional levels. Peru feels that the effectiveness of the Register should be improved by the inclusion of information on the actual existence of weapons as well as on production and local procurement, and that it should also include new categories of weapons. Peru has furnished the Register with the required information.

In this connection, we are alarmed at the persistence of clandestine activities that thwart the control of international arms transfers and divert the resources needed for development to military spending and arms stockpiles. It will be recalled that in this connection Peru has suggested that the assistance of specialized non-governmental bodies, university research centres and the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament could be helpful in identifying and studying such practices.

Here, we also view as anachronistic forms of subsidy and State economic assistance that promote disguised stockpiling and allow some States to evade the criteria set forth in the Register of Conventional Arms. Unfortunately, such attitudes aid and abet the production and transfer of conventional weapons and thereby pose serious threats to security within the framework of the qualitatively new international context.

The question of international arms transfers calls for comprehensive treatment by our Organization so that all its aspects and consequences can be considered. Aside from its impact on security and on the economy, arms transfers have a destabilizing political and social effect. The illicit or clandestine traffic in weapons is also both the cause and the effect of excessive and uncontrolled arms production. We should recall that inaction with regard to illicit arms trafficking has led to its unprecedented intensification, which is especially dangerous in view of the persistent problems we must face in a world replete with potential conflicts. Producer States, therefore, have the obligation to include or establish more effective controls over the transfer of the weapons produced to other countries and to submit information about them to the Register. Similarly, we find it unacceptable that the permanent members of the Security Council responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security should be the principal exporters of weapons to the third world, where the greatest number of conflicts have occurred since the founding of the Organization.

This year the international community has resumed its efforts to reach the final objective of eliminating anti-personnel land-mines through moratoriums on their production and export as well by limiting the indiscriminate effects of their use. We regret the failure of the recent international meeting on amendment of the Convention on certain conventional weapons, held at Geneva, which will have serious repercussions. In the specific case of my own country, men, women and children have suffered from this scourge on their own land, where anti-personnel land-mines have been placed by foreign military personnel, an illegal act in violation of international law.

Peru deems it essential to adopt the necessary measures to eliminate such instruments. In that process it supports the establishment of a voluntary fund to finance information and training programmes on de-mining, to which we will definitely contribute. Similarly, we deem it essential to establish improved controls over the producers and exporters of land-mines and to set up standards to determine the responsibilities of States and the application of sanctions for damage caused to non-combatant victims and the environment.

Within our efforts both to accelerate the process of regional disarmament and to disseminate information on the goals of general and complete disarmament, the United Nations regional centres play an important role, which must be maintained and strengthened. Notwithstanding the financial problems the regional centres are facing, we do not feel it appropriate to shut them down. We recognize, however, the urgent need to find alternative sources of funding for those Centres. Peru has therefore asked for the cooperation of countries in the Western Hemisphere, non-governmental organizations and academic foundations and institutions. At the same time, we need to redefine the goals of the regional centres and adapt them to present-day challenges in international relations with regard to cooperation for peace and security.

The activities of the centres are dependent on the guidelines laid down by States and on the resources that States give them. The delegation of Peru feels that the Regional Centre in Latin America and the Caribbean can be an effective instrument for ensuring the promotion, in the region, of a culture of peace, facilitating the redirection of funds from current military spending to social-development activities and developing a new approach to preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peace-building. Finally, the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean must become an instrument for creating awareness with regard to disarmament and security in the region consonant with the post-cold-war era.

At the beginning of this year the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) decided on the indefinite extension of that Treaty. Similarly, we adopted Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. Peru supported that decision because it regards the NPT as the only available mechanism for continuing the process of nuclear disarmament and achieving cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We therefore reject continued nuclear testing and deplore the resumption of such testing by some nuclear-weapon States. My country will continue to play a part in joint activities to repudiate such activities, as it did

in the common position taken by the South Pacific Permanent Commission, and we also welcome the historic meeting held recently by the States parties to the Treaties of Tlatelolco and Rarotonga, which we view as the beginning of a dynamic understanding between those two groups.

Peru has noted with satisfaction the recent announcement by France, the United States of America and the United Kingdom that they are prepared to sign the Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga. Those signatures and the prompt ratification of the Protocols will lead to the consolidation of the process of nuclear disarmament and will facilitate the establishment of a southern hemisphere free from nuclear weapons.

Mr. Al-Thaqafi (Saudi Arabia)(*interpretation from Arabic*): It gives me pleasure, Mr. Chairman, to begin by congratulating you on your election to chair the First Committee at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly. I wish you and the other officers of the Committee every success in conducting our work, and I would express the hope that we shall all be able to work in concert for the achievement of the goal which we have come here to achieve, namely, the creation, for our children and for coming generations, of a new world free of all weapons of mass destruction.

From the beginning, the position of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been one of support for all treaties and conventions that aim at eliminating all types of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, because we in the Kingdom are eager to see the world's inhabitants live in an atmosphere free from the threat of weapons of mass destruction and devastation. My country's Government has always attached great importance to all efforts that aim at eliminating such weapons from all regions of the world, and in particular from the Middle East. We have, therefore, participated in all the activities of the specialized committees of the General Assembly and in the work of the technical committee established at the 101st session of the League of Arab States.

In this respect, we are pleased to convey the gratification and satisfaction of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at the General Assembly's consensus adoption of resolution 49/71 on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In this regard, I call on the parties concerned in the region to adopt practical measures to translate this objective into reality.

The idea of establishing a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East dates back to 1974, when it was first proposed to the General Assembly. Since then, the General Assembly has adopted resolutions every year calling for the establishment of such a zone. The concept was further developed in 1990 with a call to make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. The General Assembly annually adopts a consensus resolution in which it calls for the establishment of such a zone and urges all the countries of the region to accede to the NPT.

Though more than 20 years have passed since the first United Nations call for establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, some of the countries of the region which have a nuclear capability continue to procrastinate, have yet to heed the international calls for accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and have failed to date to submit their nuclear facilities to the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The Government of Saudi Arabia was keen to participate in a positive and effective manner in the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the NPT held in New York in April 1995. We have reaffirmed our abiding belief that the effectiveness of the Treaty must be enhanced by strengthening the safeguards regime of the Vienna IAEA and ensuring its universality. The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is of the opinion that a number of controls and criteria must be elaborated with a view to achieving the hoped-for progress in all aspects of the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, in line with resolution 1 (I) of 1946. Consequently, the Government of the servant of the two holy shrines appeals to all countries that have not done so to hasten to accede to the Treaty as soon as possible, in order to contribute to the establishment of international security and stability.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia effectively participated in the Review Conference of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects, which was recently held in Geneva and completed its work in Vienna. The land-mines Protocol was discussed at that Conference. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has contributed to the voluntary trust fund set up by the United Nations for assistance in mine-clearance in countries afflicted by such weapons among which are a number of Islamic countries. Those countries have suffered the ravages of war in the past. This support bespeaks my country's faith and understanding of the fact that these mines, which claim thousands of innocent victims every year, also threaten the inhabitants of neighbouring countries.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was one of the first countries to sign the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. We participate actively in all the periodic meetings convened by the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). We are now working to establish a national authority in the Kingdom for direct coordination and liaison with the OPCW.

The system represented by the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is an important confidence-building measure, but will not be effective until it applies to all weapons, including weapons of mass destruction, and their vectors and delivery systems. The Register must also cover conventional weapons that are domestically produced and its measures must apply in a balanced and non-selective manner in order for it to serve the national-security interests of all States.

These are the pillars on which rests the policy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia towards all issues falling under the question of weapons of mass destruction. We ask God Almighty to spare us and succeeding generations the evil of those weapons and to allow the peoples of the world to live in peace and stability.

Mr. Pak Gil Yon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): On behalf of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I should like, first of all, to congratulate Mr. Erdenechuluun on his election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. I am convinced that his able leadership and diplomatic skill will enable the Committee successfully to address all the items on its agenda.

Over the past 50 years, the United Nations has attached priority attention to the issues related to disarmament and security in order to satisfy the desire of humanity to live in a new, peaceful world without war. The international community has witnessed some progress in activating the bilateral and multilateral negotiations for disarmament and multilateral disarmament treaties, reflecting the new situation that has developed in the post-cold-war era.

This notwithstanding, the desires of peace-loving people, in particular of the non-nuclear-weapon States, have not yet been represented in a series of earlier negotiations aimed at achieving disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament. The recent disarmament conferences have focused primarily on the control of a quantitative reduction of nuclear arsenals. Consequently, the ongoing disarmament efforts cannot adequately address the issue of a qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and there remains an evasive concept on what approach should be taken to the existence of nuclear weaponry.

The nuclear-weapon States pledged themselves to the complete abolition of nuclear weapons when the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was extended indefinitely. However, they are still obsessed with the cold- war-era concept of nuclear deterrence, a concept with which they continue to justify their permanent possession and use of nuclear weapons. The nuclear-weapon States must sincerely implement their commitment to nuclear disarmament under the NPT in order to meet the desire of humanity for a new, peaceful world free from the threat of a nuclear war.

Three years have elapsed since the opening of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. When the Register of Conventional Arms came into operation, humankind expected that it would greatly contribute to confidence-building and disarmament. However, there has been growing doubt about whether the Register has indeed made a substantial contribution to controlling the arms race and the transfer of conventional arms.

Recently, the Western countries have been much concerned over the control of conventional arms, contending that the stockpiling of conventional arms would be a potential source of instability. Their true intention, however, is simply to distract the attention of the world from nuclear weapons. It is natural that the continued export of conventional arms by the Western countries will eventually lead to the stockpiling of conventional arms in other countries.

The Western countries are now fanning competition for arms purchases among Member States by exhibiting sophisticated weapons in the markets through the Register of Conventional Arms. The Register merely gives Member States the impression that if they do not buy this or that weapon, they will be in danger because their neighbour has bought it already, and thus plays the role of advertising, which stimulates competition for the purchase and sale of conventional arms.

All these facts vividly show that the Register is beneficial only for the arms-exporting countries, to satisfy their own interests. What the hell is the Register needed for then, we wonder? We would have hoped that the United Nations would not set up such an insignificant device as the Register of Conventional Arms, but that it would rather do something useful for international peace and security.

Even after the end of the cold war, international security remains a matter of great concern to the international community. In order to ensure international peace and security, the principles of equality and impartiality should be observed in international relations. Although there are big and small countries, which are at different levels of development, they are all equal and the big countries should take more responsibility for observing the principles of equality and impartiality in international relations than other countries. However, some Member States have continued to resort to interference in the internal affairs of others and to pressure Member States, in particular those in disputed regions, in disregard of the principles of equality and impartiality in international relations, even though the cold war is over. This is a root cause of ceaseless conflicts in various parts of the world. In order to put an end to conflicts and ensure international security as desired by the international community, international relations should be democratized, and arbitrariness and intervention by certain countries should be stopped.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the division of the Korean peninsula. The 50-year-old division of the country has imposed untold misery upon the Korean people, and the mistrust and confrontation between the north and south of Korea persist even today, when the world trend is moving towards *détente*. Because of the division of the Korean peninsula by foreign forces, the peninsula remains in unabated tension, which in turn has a direct negative impact on international peace and security.

From the early days of the national division, the respected and beloved leader Comrade Kim Il Sung put forward a number of reasonable proposals for the independent and peaceful reunification of the country and devoted all his efforts to their realization up to the last moment of his life. Fatherly leader Comrade Kim Il Sung advanced the three principles of independence, peaceful reunification, and a great national unity in the early 1970s, as well as a proposal in 1980, fifteen years ago, for national reunification through confederation based on the concept of "one nation and one State, two systems and two Governments" on the basis of the aforementioned three principles. In 1993, he also put forward the Ten-Point Programme for the Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Country's Reunification, which offered a realistic and concrete way for the realization of reunification.

The proposals for national reunification put forward by the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung are the most reasonable and above-board programme of reunification, fully reflecting the reality of the north and south of Korea, characterized by differences in political ideas and systems, as well as the Korean people's desire for national reunification on the principle of neither side conquering or being conquered by the other.

The pan-national unified State to be established in accordance with the proposal for reunification through confederation will form a confederated government in which the two regional autonomous governments of the north and south of Korea participate on an equal footing, and will be an independent, peaceful, non-aligned and neutral State that does not depend on any other big Power.

Any desire for the resumption of the north-south dialogue and the improvement of inter-Korean relations towards eventual national reunification can be achieved only by practical deeds, not by mere words. As long as the National Security Law of south Korea — which defines the fellow-countryman of the north as the enemy — and the concrete wall, a symbol of national division, remain in place, the south Korean authorities have no qualification or justification whatsoever for talking about the improvement of north-south relations and national reunification. Therefore, all the legal and physical barriers impeding national unity, reconciliation and reunification should be removed first for the north-south dialogue.

The pressing task of ensuring peace and security on the Korean peninsula and hastening national reunification is to establish a new peace arrangement. There are two categories of issues related to the establishment of a new peace arrangement: one to be solved between the north and south of Korea and another to be settled between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States.

The north and south of Korea adopted the Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, and Cooperation and Exchanges between the north and south in December 1991, which is the *de facto* written inter-Korean peace arrangement. All that the north and south have to do is to put this peace arrangement into operation. However, no peace arrangement has yet been established between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States. The DPRK has therefore proposed to the United States negotiations to establish a peace arrangement to replace the present armistice mechanism. The armistice mechanism existing on the Korean peninsula has become a nominal one. This mechanism has been paralysed so long that it can no longer supervise the present armistice status, let alone ensure peace on the Korean peninsula.

Once a new peace arrangement is established between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America, which is primarily responsible for peace

on the Korean peninsula, the legal and institutional mechanism for ensuring peace on the Korean peninsula will be arranged. This will, in turn, help operate the present peace arrangement between the north and the south, dramatically ease tensions on the Korean peninsula and contribute to stability in the North-East Asia and Pacific region.

Today, the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula is being resolved efficiently since the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States adopted the Agreed Framework in Geneva in October last year and both have been taking practical steps to implement it. In this regard, we would like to draw the attention of this Committee to the joint United States-south Korean military exercise, code-named "Foal Eagle-95", now under way in south Korea. This is, indeed, the same version of the "Team Spirit" joint exercise, merely renamed "Foal Eagle". This action clearly goes against the spirit of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea-United States Agreed Framework and constitutes a serious challenge to the proposal of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the establishment of a new peace arrangement.

If the United States remains as sincere in its approach as it was during its discussion with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the nuclear issue, the issue of the establishment of a new peace arrangement on the Korean peninsula will certainly be resolved.

The continuation of the state of armistice in Korea still links the relationship between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United Nations to the continuing belligerency. The United Nations, which is also responsible for the Korean question, should pay due attention to the establishment of a new peace arrangement and work hard to do its part in promoting its materialization. This is the only logical course, both with a view to making a clean slate of the United Nations past unsavoury relationship with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a dignified United Nations Member State, and in the light of implementing resolution 3390 B (XXX), calling for the dissolution of the "United Nations Command" and the replacement of the Armistice Agreement with a peace agreement on the Korean peninsula.

The dissolution of the "United Nations Command" in south Korea, which is the United States armed forces in the true sense of the word, is the key to ending the belligerent relationship between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United Nations and to improving it. Nevertheless, it has been alleged continuously that the dissolution of the "United Nations Command" falls to the authority of the Security Council. In its resolution 84 (1950), adopted in July 1950, which is claimed as the legal basis for the "United Nations Command", the Security Council did not decide to establish the "Command" but recommended only that the assistance of Member States be made available to the United States-led unified forces. This is a clear example of the way in which the United Nations has ever since been misused against a small nation by a big Power.

We hope that the United Nations will divest the foreign forces in south Korea of the United Nations helmet and dissolve the "United Nations Command" in accordance with resolution 3390 B (XXX) in order to correct the past wrongdoings and restore its credibility, which is now in jeopardy.

In conclusion, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea expresses its hope that the Committee will achieve fruitful results during the current discussion of all agenda items, in conformity with the demand of the new era and the desires of the world's peace-loving people.

Mr. Shewaneh (Ethiopia): Allow me to congratulate Mr. Erdenechuluun on his election to the chairmanship of this body. We are confident that we will achieve successful results under his wise and able chairmanship. Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

We are gathered here at a unique and historic moment to celebrate our achievements and review the shortcomings of the past five decades in the field of disarmament and international security. After half a century of collective searching for peace and security, we regret to find that our failures still outweigh our recorded achievements. However, we are also pleased to acknowledge that major steps have already been taken, particularly after the end of the cold war.

Just five months ago, during the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) we adopted a consensus resolution extending the Treaty indefinitely. We established a milestone in the non-proliferation regime through our full support for the permanent status of the Treaty. We also believe that the NPT, extended indefinitely, will continue to serve as a catalyst to our endeavours to curb nuclear-weapon proliferation and to foster disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament.

The resumption of nuclear-weapon tests after the extension of the NPT is a development contrary to the expectations of most of us. We commend the Russian

Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States for their commitment to their respective decisions on a moratorium. We support the call made to the other nuclear-weapon States to follow suit by exercising the utmost restraint in nuclear-testing.

The Conference on Disarmament began negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty in January 1994, in accordance with resolution 48/70, of which my country had the privilege of being a sponsor. We applaud the measures recently taken by the nuclear-weapon States for a true zero-yield option. The will expressed to sign a comprehensive and effectively verifiable test-ban treaty in 1996 can now, we believe, materialize without reservation.

A realistic approach to nuclear disarmament demands action to curb the further production of nuclear weapons. We therefore believe that the Conference on Disarmament should be empowered with specific mandates to negotiate a cut-off treaty banning the production and stockpiling of fissile materials for nuclear-weapons purposes.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the globe is an integral part of nuclear disarmament. Thirty years ago, in July 1964, the first Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was held in Addis Ababa, adopted the resolution that declared Africa a denuclearized zone. The General Assembly of the United Nations has also adopted a series of consensus resolutions since 1965 calling for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa.

After years of negotiation and hard-work, the OAU-United Nations Group of Experts has come out with a final draft treaty for a second time. The African Heads of State and Government adopted the final text of the African nuclear-weapon-free zone Treaty during the thirty-first ordinary session of the OAU Summit, which was held in June 1995 in Addis Ababa. We need more and more nuclear-weapon-free zones. An African nuclear-weapon-free zone would strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. It would also enhance international peace and security. We therefore call upon the other members of the international community, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to join us in adopting the Pelindaba text of the African nuclear-weapon-free zone Treaty.

After nearly two decades of arduous negotiations we were able to adopt resolution 47/39, in which the General Assembly commended the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction. The Convention has been open for signature since January 1993. It is commendable that 159 States have already signed the Convention. However, its ratification is long overdue. On our part, the legal and administrative process is under way to enable Ethiopia to be one of the first 65 nations to ratify the Convention in order to ensure its enforcement.

Another point of serious concern for my delegation continues to be the excessive production, accumulation and illegal transfer and use of conventional weapons. We support the efforts under way to strengthen the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Transparency in armaments and universal participation in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms would contribute a great deal to conventional disarmament.

In the category of conventional arms are the anti-personnel land-mines, which kill or wound more than 20,000 people annually. Despite the recorded achievement of clearing about 10,000 land-mines a year, it is reported that between 2 million and 5 million land-mines are laid during the same period.

We appreciate the measures taken by a number of countries to curb the export of such deadly weapons, in accordance with resolutions 48/75 K and 49/75 D. We also welcome the outcome of the July 1995 international meeting on mine clearance and the pledges made there. As statistics on mine clearance clearly show, the task ahead is enormous. The voluntary trust fund needs therefore to be greatly strengthened. These efforts are basically reactions to the problems faced. Therefore, there is a compelling need for a total ban on these insidious weapons in common use.

I should like to conclude by reiterating that disarmament and international security need greater attention and our common, unequivocal efforts and commitments. For the past three days we have celebrated the jubilee of our Organization. We will be able to celebrate the centennial of the United Nations by exchanging success stories if the resolutions, declarations and programmes of actions we have adopted in the last 50 years are fully implemented. I am convinced of this because I believe that, if there is a will, then there is definitely a way.

Mr. Ayewah (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation wishes to congratulate Mr. Erdenechuluun on his election to the chairmanship of the First Committee at this historic session of the United Nations General Assembly. We are confident that under his able guidance our deliberations will be successful. We wish to assure him and the other officers of the Committee of our support as they carry out the duties of their important offices. We also avail ourselves of

this opportunity to express appreciation to Ambassador Rodriguez of Ecuador for his stewardship during the forty-ninth session.

A little over fifty years ago, mankind experienced for the first time the destructive power of the atom and almost immediately thereafter resolved to put a stop to it. The first resolution of the General Assembly, adopted in January 1946, established a Commission which was given, among others, the urgent task of making specific proposals for the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Almost fifty years after that resolution, the unanimous decision to extend the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) indefinitely was adopted. That decision did not take into account whether or not the provisions of the Treaty had been strictly complied with by States parties, nor did it lay down a specific plan for nuclear disarmament. Indeed, the appropriateness of that decision has already been put to the test by the nuclear tests carried out soon after the recent indefinite extension of the NPT.

Two other decisions were taken at the Review and Extension Conference of the NPT, namely, "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament" and "Strengthening the Review Process for the Treaty". Those two decisions could be likened to damage-control measures tardily adopted after a situation has got out of control. The effectiveness of these measures is left totally to chance.

For the majority of those who acceded to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States, non-proliferation was not the objective but merely a process towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. If, after 25 years of the NPT, more nuclear weapons exist in our world than existed when the Treaty was signed, then let it not be said that the decision to make the Treaty permanent was a consensus decision. It was not. That decision to maintain nuclear weapons in perpetuity in the hands of a few diminishes somewhat the achievement of the United Nations in the area of peace and security.

Nigeria takes note of the commitment to achieve a true zero-yield test ban by 1996. However, we believe that the ban should be of unlimited duration in order better to ensure nuclear disarmament. Additional, long-overdue measures of nuclear disarmament are the cut-off in the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes and the granting of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States in a legally binding instrument. Both of these measures are already on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. We wish to call upon all States to make conscious efforts to ensure progress on these two agenda items during the 1996 session of that forum. In all sincerity, these are measures that should be carried out in this century.

At this session the General Assembly will be called upon to endorse the Treaty of Pelindaba, the objective of which is to establish Africa as a nuclear-weapon- free zone, pursuant both to the regional objective of peace, security and development and to the global objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world. For Nigeria, the conclusion of the Treaty is the realization of a longstanding and major foreign-policy objective. Very early in our nationhood we demonstrated our commitment to a nuclear-weapon-free Africa when, in 1961, we boldly opposed the testing of nuclear weapons on the continent and modified our diplomatic relations accordingly.

Since then we have continued to work with others at the United Nations to remove all obstacles to a nuclear-weapon-free Africa. Today, we are proud to have been in the vanguard of that initiative, which has now led to this historic achievement. We look forward to a swift ratification of the Treaty of Pelindaba within the coming year. Nigeria is confident that the number of ratifications necessary for its entry into force will be attained in record time. We take this opportunity to call upon all nuclear-weapon States to demonstrate their respect for the status of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone by signing the relevant protocols attached to the Treaty.

My delegation wishes to thank Mr. Ian Kenyon, the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, for the information contained in his statement to the First Committee at this fiftieth session. The need for speedy action by all Member States to ensure the early entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention cannot be overemphasized, nor can the need for all States parties to respect all of the provisions of the Convention, in particular article XI, the implementation of which constitutes the best guarantee for its universal, harmonious and non-discriminatory operation.

Nigeria, like many other States, considers the Chemical Weapons Convention to be not just a security treaty but also an avenue for promoting the prosperity of States parties. In this connection we would like to note the positive outcome of past regional seminars and to thank the Provisional Secretariat for its cooperation. We urge it to continue to support future seminars in the African region. Furthermore, care should be taken to ensure that the principle of transparency in the work of the Preparatory Commission is maintained and that deserved attention is

given to equitable geographical representation in the secretariat's recruitment policies.

Nigeria wishes to support continued efforts to strengthen the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction through an appropriate verification regime that will not deny developing countries access to vital technical know-how and equipment for development in the biological, medical and other related fields.

The Convention on bacteriological and toxin weapons, as well as the Chemical Weapons Convention, banned biological, toxin and chemical weapons in perpetuity. The lack of verification of one or the delayed entry-into-force of the other must not lead anyone to view those two Conventions as mere non-proliferation measures. They are prohibition measures, placing equal obligation on all never again to develop, possess, stockpile or use such weapons. The tendency to put them in the same category as nuclear weapons can only turn back the hands of the clock, and that would be a disservice to humanity. Rather, let us reiterate our commitments to the total prohibition of those weapons as established by the two Conventions and press ahead for a similar instrument on the most lethal of them all, nuclear weapons.

Nigeria is of the view that conventional arms control and disarmament should be pursued on both global and regional levels through multilaterally negotiated regimes which place great emphasis on confidence-building measures. The United Nations General Assembly has endorsed several sets of guidelines and recommendations in this connection. These include, *inter alia*, the 1988 guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures and guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security. My delegation cannot, therefore, support any suggestion for the development of a code of conduct for the transfer of arms, which can only constitute additional sets of conditionalities for arms purchases.

In conclusion, Nigeria would like to see the First Committee at this historic fiftieth session of the General Assembly motivated by the desire for cooperation in finding genuine and lasting solutions to those problems that continue to confront us in the area of disarmament in the remaining part of this twentieth century, in order to bequeath to the next generation in the twenty-first century a world which is indeed free of these weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. García (Venezuela)(*interpretation from Spanish*): First of all, allow me to take this opportunity to extend my delegations's congratulations to the Chairman on his election to preside over the First Committee at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly. We also wish to congratulate the other officers of the Committee. We are certain that under their guidance the work of the Committee will have positive results.

Venezuela has always supported the efforts of the international community to achieve a complete ban on nuclear testing. At their recent meeting at Quito the Heads of State and Government of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Concerted Policy Action — the Rio Group — expressed their profound concern at and repudiation of the resumption of nuclear testing by certain nuclear-weapon States. Thus we are stressing the urgent need to reach agreement on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty no later than 1996.

We were pleased to hear the announcement made in the General Assembly by the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Mr. Warren Christopher, that his country was prepared in the coming year to conclude a treaty banning all nuclear testing. We firmly support that position, and we hope that the other nuclear-weapon States will be prepared to follow suit. Until that objective is attained, all States, and especially those officially recognized as nuclear-weapon States, are committed to observing a moratorium on nuclear testing.

I should also like to emphasize the fact that there are now more than 157 States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This demonstrates the will of the international community to avoid the use of, and to put a definitive end to, such weapons, which are capable of wiping the human race from the face of the Earth.

Latin America and the Caribbean are a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The Treaty of Tlatelolco, to which more than 30 of the States of the region are parties and signatories, is a guarantee and an example of the political will to ban the non-peaceful use of nuclear energy. Venezuela supports all United Nations initiatives and efforts aimed at establishing nuclear-free zones in various regions of the world and hopes that this will become a reality in the near future.

Another extremely important issue is that of negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of weapons of mass destruction. We have noted the positive changes that have taken place on the international scene, and we trust that the Conference

on Disarmament can begin concrete negotiations to achieve an international treaty clearly setting forth those assurances without delay.

Venezuela is among the States signatories to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. National legislative steps towards its ratification are at a very advanced stage and we hope to deposit the instrument of ratification with the United Nations in due time.

My delegation also firmly supports strengthening the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction and hopes that the Ad Hoc Committee set up by the Special Conference of the States Parties to the Convention will effectively fulfil the tasks entrusted to it in order to ensure that negotiations are concluded on a verification protocol strengthening that Convention.

Furthermore, we welcome the progress achieved during the first part of the Review Conference of the 1981 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects with the adoption of the new Protocol IV on blinding laser weapons. We deeply regret, however, that the Conference was unable to achieve agreement on a true and effective strengthening of Protocol II, on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of anti-personnel land-mines. My delegation hopes that this will be achieved at the resumed meeting of the Review Conference.

As to conventional weapons, my delegation notes with concern the growing traffic in these weapons, which is a destabilizing element and has a serious effect on areas of tension, increasing insecurity and jeopardizing the peace process. Faced with this situation, we trust that the Conference on Disarmament will continue to address the question of the transparency of armaments in order to achieve viable and satisfactory results that will contribute to international peace and security.

We attach great importance to this question and believe that greater efforts must be made to find ways of controlling the situation, without prejudice to the legitimate rights of States to defence and security in the context of growing transparency through an effective register of conventional arms.

Year after year, in this Committee and other disarmament forums, we have reiterated our political will to achieve the objective of general and complete disarmament. This goal has not yet been achieved, however, and we continue to owe this debt to the international community. We are convinced that the time has come to take firm strides towards negotiating general and complete disarmament, which will put an end to the uncertainty created by the increase in weapons of mass destruction and the development of new technologies in the military field.

In paragraph 3 of resolution 49/85 the incoming Chairman of the First Committee is requested to continue consultations on the further rationalization of the work and effective functioning of the Committee. My delegation feels that this is an extremely important matter if we are to improve the work of the Committee. We feel that the fiftieth session of the General Assembly is an appropriate time for achieving substantive progress and conclusions in this field.

Mr. García (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to begin by congratulating Mr. Erdenechuluun on his election to guide the work of the First Committee. We are certain that his wise judgement and experience will ensure that our deliberations will lead to satisfactory results. My delegation will always be prepared to cooperate with him to that end.

There have been many highlights in the field of disarmament and international security over the past year. The Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) approved the indefinite extension of the Treaty. They adopted important decisions on "strengthening the Review Process for the Treaty" and on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament".

Within the scope of the implementation of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, we note with satisfaction that 33 countries of our hemisphere have signed and 32 have ratified it. Similarly, the negative security assurances granted by the nuclear Powers to the Parties to the Treaty are in full force. The existence of a nuclear-weapon-free zone within the area covered by the Treaty of Tlatelolco has thus become a near-reality. Progress has also been made towards the realization of the comprehensive test-ban treaty and it is hoped that our aspirations will be fulfilled in the first half of 1996.

Despite all this, the peace dividends remain to be seen in the field of disarmament and international security. Now that a system of international relations has emerged from a foundation other than that of hostile confrontation between

East and West, and that the doctrine of nuclear deterrence is no longer valid — if in fact it ever was justifiable — we have returned to this room to address several issues that have attracted the concern of the international community.

Nuclear tests have been carried out recently and further tests have been announced. The commitments undertaken by the nuclear Powers at the Review Conference of the NPT to exercise utmost restraint until the comprehensive test-ban treaty enters into force have thus been compromised. Fortunately, the international community has reacted firmly in opposition to those tests. At the recent Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Cartagena, the Heads of State and Government strongly rejected any kind of nuclear testing carried out without the least consideration for its serious environmental consequences and negative impact on international peace, security and stability. Similarly, the Heads of State and Government of the non-aligned countries fervently deplored the resumption and continuation of nuclear testing. They appealed to the nuclear-weapon States to act in a manner consistent with the negotiations on and objectives of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty and to end such testing.

Among the issues of disarmament and international security deserving of special attention, we must certainly include the question of conventional weapons and in particular of the illicit traffic in them. My delegation shares the concern shown at the enormous sums of money devoted to the acquisition of weapons and the uncontrolled increase in the illicit traffic in arms, ammunition and explosives.

As was expressed in Colombia's appeal, adopted by the eleventh Summit of the non-aligned countries at their recent meeting in Cartagena:

> "The major arms exporters have taken advantage of the new international situation to increase their sales to developing countries, since the States where such companies operate do not take effective measures to restrict their illicit trade and traffic in weapons to groups of terrorists, mercenaries and common criminals, who enjoy easy access to such weapons thanks to the permissiveness of those who tolerate and promote this profitable business and who benefit from their apathetic behaviour."

Finally, we wish to refer to the serious threat which anti-personnel land-mines pose to peace, security and the lives of millions of individuals throughout the world. That which, for some, is merely another product for export, a statistic, is for hundreds of thousands of individuals, many of them children, the tangible cause of injury or death.

We must deplore the fact that there has been no significant progress in eradicating these instruments designed for mutilation. We therefore reiterate our support for the initiative of an international moratorium on the production and transfer of anti-personnel land-mines, with a view to their complete elimination.

Mr. Ekwall (Sweden): Since this is the first time my delegation has spoken in the First Committee I should like first of all to extend my congratulations to Ambassador Erdenechuluun and to you, Sir, on your elections as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively. You can count on my delegation's full support in the important work before us. Our congratulations go also to the other officers of the Committee.

Last Friday France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America jointly announced their intention to sign the relevant Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga in the first half of 1996. With respect to that announcement, the Swedish Foreign Minister, Mrs. Lena Hjelm-Wallen, made the following statement on 20 October 1995, which I would like to bring to the attention of the Committee. She said:

> "It is very gratifying that France, the United States and the United Kingdom have now decided to accede in the first half of 1996 to the Rarotonga Treaty on a South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone. Sweden warmly welcomes this decision. At the same time, our demand that all nuclear tests should cease immediately stands firm.
>
> "France, the United States and the United Kingdom also made it clear in the Geneva negotiations recently that they want a test-ban treaty which prohibits all nuclear explosions without exception. This is also very welcome, and we assume that it will be possible to achieve a treaty during 1996."

The Acting Chairman: The representative of France has asked to make a statement in exercise of his right of reply, and I now call on him.

Mr. Richier (France)(*interpretation from French*): At this meeting a delegation spoke with regard to the completion of our series of nuclear tests. Once again, his remarks were unacceptable and, I would add, unproductive and pointless.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.

United Nations

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General Assembly

Fiftieth session

Official Records

First Committee

10th Meeting

Thursday, 26 October 1995, 10 a.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdenechuluun . . . . . (Mongolia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda items 57-81 *(continued)*

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Diawara (Mali) (*interpretation from French*): Allow me at the outset to offer you, Sir, the sincere congratulations of the delegation of the Republic of Mali on you election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Please be assured of our complete cooperation in the exercise of your mandate. We also warmly encourage the other members of the Bureau and the Secretariat in the remarkable work they are doing. Lastly, please convey our congratulations to your predecessor, who fulfilled his role with competence and dedication.

Through the disarmament and international security questions which it addresses, the First Committee is certainly the General Assembly body to which anguished appeals are made regarding the problems of the stockpiling, proliferation and illicit traffic in terrifying weapons and the increasing phenomenon of insecurity throughout the world, even within towns and in the countryside.

In fact, in spite of the progress made in slowing down the arms race since the end of the cold war, mankind still has an awesome amount of nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other weapons, the use — or even the partial use — of which would suffice to destroy all life on our planet.

And yet, because of the disappearance of the two antagonistic blocs, the international community now has the rare opportunity of drafting a global contract in favour of general and complete disarmament. This is therefore the right time to restore the authority of the United Nations in its functions of maintaining and safeguarding international peace and security. Mali strongly supports all ongoing initiatives and activities aimed at providing the United Nations with adequate human and material means to conduct, more effectively, verification operations covering production, proliferation and illicit international trafficking in weapons.

The north-west region of Africa, to which Mali belongs, has felt the repercussions of the illicit traffic in small arms in a particularly dramatic way. International illicit transfers of small arms and their accumulation in many countries are a threat to populations and national and regional security and a factor in the destabilization of States. This strong concern was behind the request made in October 1993 by the Head of State of Mali to the Secretary-General of the United Nations to provide assistance in the collection and control of the illicit small arms that were proliferating in the country. We wish here to extend to the Secretary-General and his Special Envoys, Mr. Marack Goulding and Mr. William Eteki M'Boumoua, the thanks of the Government of Mali for their work in the field.

The Secretary-General's note reveals that the advisory mission organized in the Sahel in August 1994 and March 1995 recommended the need for a subregional approach to the resolution of the problem of the illicit proliferation of small arms and the ensuing insecurity. The

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recommendations of the advisory mission confirm the views of the Government of the Republic of Mali regarding subregional and regional security. In fact, thanks to a political will shared by neighbouring countries, Mali is concertedly working to inject a new dynamism into mechanisms for bilateral cooperation to ensure better security along its borders.

In the subregional and regional context, periodic meetings are held at all levels within cooperative entities. They help to coordinate security policies designed to inhibit the phenomenon of widespread banditry. None the less, the full implementation of resolution 49/75 G, adopted during the forty-ninth session on the initiative of Mali with the support of neighbouring countries and the unanimous support of other Member States, is a daily and ongoing imperative aimed at preserving and strengthening the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States of the region.

In resolution 49/75 G the General Assembly invites Member States to implement national control measures in order to check the illicit circulation of small arms, in particular by curbing the illegal export of such arms. It also invites the international community to give appropriate support to the efforts made by the affected countries to suppress the illicit traffic in small arms, which is likely to hamper their development. Tireless efforts must be made to put an end to this scourge. That is why resolution 49/75 G continues to be extremely timely and its reexamination at this session is entirely appropriate. My delegation will be seeking the support of all countries in favour of that resolution.

The proliferation of conflicts that we have seen since the disappearance of the two major blocs feeds the stockpiling and circulation of conventional, chemical and bacteriological weapons. That is why the establishment of genuine warning systems has become a matter of vital importance requiring the support of all our States. That is also why our country is committed to the establishment of a central organ of the mechanism for the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts under African authority. We invite the international community to support this initiative.

The international community should also lend its support to Africa in the maintenance and strengthening of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament. This Centre and the other two, in Asia and in Latin America, are valuable instruments for the promotion of peace in those parts of the world, which are so afflicted by armed conflict. The financial difficulties of the United Nations are real, but no price can be put on peace.

Africa remains the continent most affected by land-mines. It has 20 million mines, buried in many countries. Thus, the problem of mine clearance remains a major challenge, especially when one considers that it takes from $50 to $300 to remove a single mine. It is therefore urgent to put an end to the production of land-mines and to ensure strict control of existing stocks, prevent their sale and plan for their progressive destruction if we wish to avoid aggravating an already extremely disturbing situation. We wish to pay tribute to those countries that have decided to put an end to the production of mines.

General and complete disarmament is attainable, because the ideological motivations that underlay certain militaristic doctrines have now disappeared. Happily, this new context made it possible in May 1995 to extend the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons indefinitely. By this historic act, the vast majority of States not only committed themselves not to possess nuclear weapons, but also expressed extraordinary confidence in the ability of nuclear-weapon States to manage this deadly weapon. Above all, they expressed their faith in the capacity of the nuclear Powers to undertake simultaneously a ban on testing and the gradual destruction of their nuclear arsenals. Those Powers must now assume the moral obligation to meet the expectations of mankind.

We reaffirm that general and complete disarmament can contribute to promoting economic and social development. It has been readily demonstrated that the use of chemical, bacteriological and other weapons of mass destruction have collateral effects on the environment, thus dangerously impoverishing the common heritage of mankind: water, land, flora and fauna.

The immense resources swallowed up by the production and accumulation of weapons must be devoted to the only race that matters: shared development and well-being. Thus, the need for general and complete disarmament becomes a moral and humanitarian imperative that must be fully assumed so that anguish and fear can vanish from our lives in the next century.

Mr. Lamamra (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation welcomes your election, Sir, to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Your well-known extensive experience and human qualities are the best promise of the success of our work. Along with my sincere congratulations, I assure you of my delegation's support

and cooperation with you and the other officers of the Committee.

Disarmament underlies every question of international peace and security. In the context of today's international relations, the new impetus given a few years ago has given rise to great hopes. Decisive results have been achieved, even though much remains to be done.

The indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is indeed a major event. The considerable importance given that instrument is a reflection of its position as the basic element of the comprehensive and universal nuclear disarmament the international community is so eager to achieve. Thus, the indefinite extension of the NPT should set off a chain reaction that will promote the successful conclusion of negotiations that, we hope, will lead to the signing of an agreement on the total prohibition of nuclear tests in 1996.

Algeria, which has voluntarily placed its nuclear research reactors and those producing radioisotopes under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system, formally deposited its instruments of accession to the NPT in January 1995. In addition, it worked diligently to achieve consensus solutions in the negotiations leading to the Treaty's extension. In this connection it is clear that my delegation shares the sense of frustration felt by the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and others at the fact that nuclear tests are still taking place, attesting to the persistence of the doctrines and strategies that led the world to the threshold of Apocalypse during the cold war and which fuelled an unbridled arms race.

The creation by the Conference on Disarmament of an ad hoc committee on a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices is a positive step that should lead to tangible results in the disarmament process. Africa has just taken a significant step in this direction, an action in which Algeria takes great pleasure, with the adoption by the Summit Meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in June 1995 of the Treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. We call upon the international community to give needed support and to enter into the commitments necessary to give full force to that Treaty.

The establishment of the Treaty has been accompanied by progress towards the entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. On 14 August of this year, Algeria, which had worked to produce this true disarmament instrument, became the thirty-third State Party to it.

Along with weapons of mass destruction, whose elimination must continue to be an urgent goal, conventional weapons quite rightly warrant the attention of the international community.

Changes in international relations have led to the freeing of enormous surpluses of military *matériel* and equipment. Algeria, which is the country in its geographical region that devotes the smallest proportion of its gross national product to national defence, is deeply concerned by transfers of conventional weapons — and especially illicit transfers, which supply terrorist networks through the territories of a number of States in the Mediterranean and Sahel-Saharan region. It is important that this question be given appropriate attention in order to preserve the security of all.

Algeria attaches primary importance to peace and security in the Mediterranean. We have developed a global approach to security in that region, integrating the requirements of peace, development and cooperation between the North and South shores in order to make the Mediterranean a zone of complementarity and joint prosperity, free from tensions.

Our ambition is to promote a renewed Mediterranean order that would consolidate stability and prosperity [illegible] supporting the democratic processes and [illegible] reforms initiated by many countries in the region, my own included, with a view to a broad-based partnership. In that context Algeria welcomes the Euro-Mediterranean conference scheduled for next month at Barcelona and is actively making preparations for it by arranging for preliminary consultations and joint undertakings to promote its success. The draft resolution on the Mediterranean that will be submitted to the Committee this year will be based on this approach and will seek the same goals.

In an unstable world, new challenges and new factors for insecurity, linked to terrorism, major transnational crime and the traffic in arms and drugs, have come to the fore on the international scene. Such criminal activities, with their transnational ramifications, with their considerable financial support and wherewithal, are obviously new and dangerous threats to the integrity of the social fabric, to the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens and to the security and stability of States. An international strategy to combat this, based on the broadest cooperation and including the inculpation of the mastermind

States and their accomplices in such crimes, is today a categorical imperative.

Mr. Berdennikov (Russian Federation)(*interpretation from Russian*): Please allow me to welcome you, the representative of friendly neighbouring Mongolia, to the important post of Chairman of the First Committee and to assure you of the full support and cooperation of the Russian delegation. I am certain that under your leadership our Committee will succeed in adopting this year, as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, important decisions designed to move forward in the sphere of disarmament and to strengthen international peace and security. It also gives me great pleasure to congratulate the other officers of the First Committee on their elections and to wish them success.

I should also like to extend sincere congratulations to Dr. Joseph Rothblat and the Pugwash Conference on their reception of the Nobel Prize for Peace this year. My country continues to support their long and noble efforts on behalf of disarmament and the removal of the threat of war. I should like to stress in particular the tangible contribution that Dr. Rothblat and the Pugwash Conference have made to solving the question of the cessation of nuclear tests.

This anniversary year has been marked by developments of historic and, I would say, undying value in the sphere of arms reduction and disarmament. I am referring to the indefinite and unconditional extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). A consensus decision to give the Treaty a permanent character, which has been consistently advocated by Russia, has strengthened the bases of international stability and security and has created better prospects for advances in the area of nuclear disarmament and the realization of the ultimate goal, the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The NPT remains the most fundamental and most nearly universal instrument for preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. During the 1990s there was a notable increase in the number of States Parties to the Treaty, from 130 at the end of 1989 to 179 at the present time, a record for disarmament agreements. In the current decade, following the accession of China and France, every nuclear Power has become Party to the Treaty. South Africa has voluntarily dismantled its nuclear weapons and joined the Treaty. Argentina and Brazil have signed the safeguards agreements and Argentina has become a party to the NPT.

With the accession of Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakstan to the Treaty as non-nuclear States it has been possible to avoid an increase in the number of States possessing nuclear weapons following the break-up of the USSR. At the present time all our partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States have become parties to the Treaty. Such developments raise hopes that the few countries that remain outside the NPT regime will soon manage to join the overwhelming majority of the international community.

Russia highly appreciates the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the area of verification of its safeguards agreements with States Parties to the NPT. We support the decisions of the IAEA Governing Council designed to enhance further the effectiveness of Agency safeguards, and we believe that the Agency's potential for detecting undeclared nuclear activities should be strengthened. We urge States that are not parties to the NPT to sign a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

On the basis of decisions taken at the Conference held in April and May this year, Russia is prepared to continue to cooperate with other NPT States Parties in attaining the Treaty's main objectives, namely, strengthening the international non-proliferation regime, achieving progress in the field of nuclear disarmament and the further development of international cooperation in the field of the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

We consider the early — and no later than 1996 — conclusion of negotiations on an international and effectively verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty to be a multilateral disarmament priority. Consensus on the key elements of that Treaty must be achieved as soon as possible, taking into account, of course, the legitimate security interests of all States. This is a prerequisite for producing a well-drafted, viable treaty that will put an end to nuclear-weapons tests, including underground tests, once and for all.

While negotiations are still in progress, it is extremely important that the nuclear Powers exercise "utmost restraint", as stipulated in the decision of the NPT Review and Extension Conference. Russia is not indifferent to the decision taken by the President of France to resume its programme of nuclear tests nor to the fact that China is continuing to conduct a series of nuclear explosions. We are convinced that "utmost restraint" in this connection should be applicable to all.

After the end of the cold war and the halting of the nuclear-arms race, the reduction of such weapons has taken on full-scale dimensions. As a result of the implementation of the INF Treaty by mid-1991, some 2,500 medium- and shorter-range nuclear missiles had been destroyed. Thus, a whole class of United States and USSR nuclear weapons were liquidated.

The START II Treaty signed by the Presidents of Russia and the United States envisages that the Parties will reduce by 1 January 2003 the total number of their nuclear warheads to two thirds of the existing levels, an action that can be described as an unprecedented reduction. Moreover, we must bear in mind that even now each of the Parties is annually dismantling no less than 2,000 nuclear warheads.

As the Presidents of Russia and the United States agreed in Washington on 27-28 September 1994, following the ratification of the START II Treaty both sides will deactivate all strategic delivery systems that are subject to reduction in accordance with the provisions of START I and START II. At that meeting the Presidents also agreed to study the possibility, after ratification of START II, of further reductions and limitations in remaining nuclear forces.

In this connection I should like particularly to stress that the preservation of and full compliance with the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems are of principled importance to the process of nuclear disarmament as a key element in maintaining strategic stability, which is the most important requirement for deep cuts in offensive strategic weapons. There is an objective interrelationship between limitations on ABMs and the possibility of deep reductions of nuclear weapons that cannot be neglected. In this connection I would remind the Committee that in their declaration of 10 May 1995 the Presidents of Russia and the United States stressed that

> "both Russia and the United States are committed to the ABM Treaty, which is a cornerstone of strategic stability".

The agreements between Russia with the United States, China and the United Kingdom not to target their strategic nuclear forces have become an important measure aimed at strengthening strategic stability and mutual confidence.

Further steps taken by Moscow and Washington in the area of nuclear-weapons reduction should be supported by similar concerted actions on the part of other nuclear Powers. We attach great importance to the four-Power declaration issued by Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom and France at Geneva on the eve of the opening of the NPT Review Conference, in which they solemnly confirmed their obligation to conduct, in a spirit of good will, talks on effective measures in the field of nuclear disarmament that, as the declaration has stressed, "remains our ultimate objective". An agreement on such measures could be finalized within the framework of a treaty on nuclear safety and strategic stability proposed by the President of Russia at the session of the General Assembly last year. The treaty would comprehensively address such issues as the cessation of the production of fissionable for military purposes, further elimination of nuclear warheads and the reduction of nuclear-weapons delivery systems. These measures could be implemented on a stage-by-stage basis taking into account the specifics of the nuclear potential of individual countries. Asymmetry of obligations would also be allowed.

It is very important, therefore, that the NPT Conference reach agreement that all nuclear States should resolutely continue to deploy systematic and consistent efforts to reduce nuclear weapons on global level, with the ultimate goal of eliminating such weapons.

The meeting of the Eight on the issues of nuclear safety, which to be held at Moscow next spring at the initiative of the President of Russia, should be a new and serious step towards strengthening international security and stability. Russia has insisted on the inclusion of the issue of nuclear disarmament in the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament as a separate item. We are prepared to discuss the possibility of establishing a different organizational framework for considering this issue at the Conference, including the creation of a relevant ad hoc committee or creating a post for a special coordinator or friend of the Chairman. Such an entity could be entrusted with drawing up a proposal on the contribution the multilateral forum might make towards achieving this comprehensive task.

Another priority in the multilateral-disarmament agenda is the early start to wide-scale negotiations on a multilateral convention prohibiting the production of fissionable materials for the manufacture of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. The establishment of an ad hoc committee at the Conference on Disarmament this year and the adoption of its mandate may create appropriate conditions for initiating such talks at the beginning of the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament. We would note that those who are preventing

the early start of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a convention prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear-weapons purposes are creating a dangerous precedent of non-compliance with the agreements contained in the NPT Conference decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament", which, as is known, refers to an "immediate commencement and early conclusion" of such negotiations.

Russia, for its part, has already halted production of weapons-grade uranium. By the year 2000, a national programme for the cessation of production of weapons-grade plutonium will be implemented. To date, 10 of the 13 reactors designed for plutonium production have been shut down. Nevertheless, even today the plutonium developed is not being used for weapons-manufacturing purposes.

United Nations Security Council resolution 984 (1995) on security guarantees for non-nuclear States, which was adopted on the eve of the Review Conference of the NPT, as well as the declarations of nuclear Powers on the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States Parties to the NPT was a major contribution to the strengthening of global security. We understand the desire of the non-nuclear States to move further in this direction and would be prepared to start work at the Conference on Disarmament on a multilateral document with binding legal force on safeguards for non-nuclear States. For this, we must re-establish an ad hoc committee to deal with this issue within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

We note with satisfaction that work on the treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free-zone in Africa has been completed. We hope that the General Assembly will be able to support such a treaty.

The decision announced on 20 October by France, the United States and the United Kingdom to join Russia and China and to sign next year the relevant protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga undoubtedly represents a step in the right direction. Russia, for its part, has always supported the efforts of the southern Pacific States aimed at establishing a nuclear-free zone in that region.

In this connection we should also like to express our hope that practical steps will be taken to establish nuclear-free zones or zones free of any types of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Like many other countries, Russia would urge that all nuclear activities of the countries of the region be brought under the IAEA safeguards as soon as possible. We also support the idea of establishing a nuclear-free zone in South-East Asia.

Russia actively participates in the work of the Special Group of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons. As a depository of that Convention, we are deeply interested in ensuring its effectiveness and in the early launching of the compliance-control mechanism that is being created. In this connection, we believe that an agreed draft protocol on Convention verification could be submitted for approval to the Fourth Review Conference in 1996 or later to a special conference of States parties.

The Russian Government is conducting serious preparatory work to ratify the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and to fulfil the obligations contained therein. A draft federal programme on the elimination of chemical weapons and the necessary legislation is also being prepared.

We support the efforts of the Hague Preparatory Commission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons related to the preparation for implementing the Convention. However, it is our understanding that the Commission will take the Russian position into account, particularly with regard to issues of converting former chemical-weapons production facilities and expenditures on verification activities.

The illicit traffic in light arms is causing an ever-growing number of human casualties. Obviously, the problem of so-called micro-disarmament raised by the Secretary-General is indeed a global one. We are ready, in principle, to support the idea of preparing a United Nations study on the role of the Organization in strengthening cooperation among States to combat illicit trafficking in such arms. Indeed, it would be useful to emphasize in this connection the way in which illicit traffic in such arms is used by illegal armed factions and terrorists for their own purposes, an activity that often has a destabilizing effect on the situation in certain countries and regions.

Unfortunately, the useful work being done in the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments of the Conference on Disarmament was suspended in 1995. We consider that the deadlock situation in which the Ad Hoc Committee found itself, and which led to stagnation in the development of the transparency process, should be unblocked as early as the beginning of the 1996 session. The Ad Hoc Committee should resume its work as soon as possible.

One of the most serious problems is the proliferation of anti-personnel land-mines, which are continuing to sow death, primarily among the civilian population, in different regions of the world. Russia, as is known, has already established a moratorium on the export of the most dangerous types of land-mines.

The recently completed first stage of the Review Conference of the inhumane weapons Convention of 1981, which raised many hopes that the land-mine issue would be resolved, has not so far yielded the desired results. Nevertheless, we must continue to search for ways to resolve this undoubtedly extremely complicated but hardly unsolvable problem, taking into account, of course, the legitimate interests of all countries.

The Russian delegation supports the findings of a study conducted by a group of governmental experts on control in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in this area.

We believe that one of today's tasks is to increase the efficiency of the entire disarmament mechanism. First of all, in our view, we could discuss ways of overcoming unnecessary fragmentation in the disarmament process and of focusing efforts in this direction within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, a unique forum for multilateral disarmament and an important element of the emerging system of international security. To that end, it is necessary not only to extend the membership of the Conference on Disarmament, but also to make its mandate more comprehensive. This will also allow us to determine ways of improving the work of the Disarmament Commission.

The Russian delegation had no objection at the Conference on Disarmament to the consensus decision of 21 September 1995 on the question of enlarging the membership of the Conference. Moreover, we have taken into account the clearly expressed opinion of the group of 23 applicant countries referred to in that decision. At the same time, we believe that this decision is not flawless, since, first, it is indecisive and incomplete. We hope that the second decision envisaged, which may in fact extend the membership of the Conference, will be adopted as soon as possible. If this happens, we will be able to say that, on 21 September, we took a step in the right direction.

I hope that the resolutions and decisions adopted by the First Committee this year will make a contribution to the solution of the problems I have mentioned.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Poland, who will speak in his capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban.

Mr. Dembinski (Poland), Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban: First, I should like to associate myself with the congratulations expressed to you, Sir, and to the other members of the Bureau yesterday by my Deputy Foreign Minister.

In my intervention today, at the close of the general debate on disarmament and international security issues, in which considerable attention has been focused on the problem of a nuclear-test ban, I believe that it will be appropriate for me to comment in some detail on the negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty and their results in 1995. While full account of this negotiation process is contained in the report of the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly, I would like to offer an insider's view of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, the subsidiary negotiating body of the Conference on Disarmament, which I have had the honour and privilege of chairing this year.

The negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty pursued by the Ad Hoc Committee in its two Working Groups, chaired respectively by Ambassador Norberg of Sweden and Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands, resumed promptly after the opening of the session of the Conference on Disarmament late last January. Unfortunately, pretty soon, the negotiations settled into a routine and rather tedious process concentrated in the main on cleaning up and rationalizing the draft rolling text inherited from 1994. The going was slow and sometimes discouraging. A plausible explanation is that, at the time, most delegations were increasingly preoccupied with the preparations for the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The fact that there were also those who opted for a "wait-and-see" stance, pending the clarification of uncertainties over the possible scope of the future treaty, certainly did not help to accelerate the pace of the negotiating process.

The climate in the Ad Hoc Committee radically changed and the talks picked up in the course of the second part of the 1995 session in the wake of the NPT Review Conference. Its historic decisions, including a commitment to complete a comprehensive treaty no later than in 1996, were important factors bringing to the Ad Hoc Committee's work a genuine sense of urgency and purpose. A welcome spirit of new flexibility and cooperation towards the

common goal resulted in remarkable progress on important aspects of the future treaty.

The mood of accommodation and compromise on the part of all delegations — both members of the Conference on Disarmament and those observers who were actively involved in the negotiations — was conducive to progress and to the determination of several key issues: first, that the comprehensive test-ban treaty would be of indefinite duration, in force for all time; secondly, that it would offer no easy-exit clause; and, last but not the least, that the zero-yield formula of the scope of the treaty, unequivocally endorsed by three nuclear-weapon Powers and many other States, was tantamount to a truly comprehensive ban on nuclear testing.

While the fact of the commencement of nuclear testing by two nuclear Powers dismayed delegations and strained the atmosphere in the Ad Hoc Committee, it also had one unexpected effect: it strengthened the determination of all delegations to complete the negotiating process as soon as possible and to put in place a fully effective treaty by the target date of no later than 1996. That resolve took on added significance when France formally committed itself, without condition, to sign the comprehensive test-ban treaty in 1996.

I readily agree that the latest update of the draft rolling text annexed to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee is still not exactly easy "pillow" reading. Despite strenuous efforts to get rid of the many brackets and redundancies and to render it more coherent, what we have been able to put together is a text which is still bulky and replete with brackets. They indicate alternative wording options or whole provisions, whose support ranges from several delegations to sometimes only one delegation.

The ungainly rolling text, however, is not the whole story behind the work of the Ad Hoc Committee this year: there is also a more positive side to it. A careful perusal of the document will reveal, I am sure, the extent of the technical groundwork covered, especially with respect to the verification mechanism, the architecture of its International Monitoring System, its funding and some aspects of on-site inspections, to mention just a few.

In my comments, meant to provide an overview of the state of negotiations, on the comprehensive test-ban treaty, let me briefly dwell on at least some key areas of the rolling text. As will be seen, part 1 of the text groups an assortment of standard treaty provisions, some quite substantive, which are practically agreed upon, with an occasional bracket here or there inserted pending the final decision on other related provisions, especially those concerning the implementing organization.

Part 2 of the rolling text includes heavily bracketed language options on scope, the core provision of the treaty, as well as on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, peaceful nuclear explosions, the implementing organization, reservations, entry into force, duration and withdrawal, review, and the question of security assurances to States parties. It also contains a lengthy text on verification together with its draft Protocol. It must be observed that, in some instances, draft provisions listed above have been included in the rolling text at the insistence of one delegation only.

As I have already indicated, during the latter part of the 1995 session of the Conference on Disarmament, the Ad Hoc Committee saw a major conceptual breakthrough on the key issue of the scope of the treaty and the basic obligations of States parties. The emerging convergence of views around the zero-yield option, endorsed by France, the United States and the United Kingdom and — as I understand — also by the Russian Federation, as well as by many non-nuclear-weapon States, cannot be overestimated in its historic significance and its direct impact on the course of the negotiations. It goes without saying that a consensus in this regard of all five nuclear Powers would pave the way to an agreement on the precise language of the scope provision, along the lines of the original Australian formula of an undertaking:

> "not to carry out any nuclear-weapon-test explosion or any other nuclear explosions".

Now, as soon as this pivotal agreement is achieved — and I expect it to be achieved at the outset of the Ad Hoc Committee's formal session in 1996 — other important draft provisions should start falling into place.

This should be the case, first of all, with regard to the verification regime, where a broad agreement has surfaced in Geneva on its basic components. As is known, with an international monitoring system as its core, it would also include associated confidence-building and transparency measures, a process for consultations and clarification, and mandatory on-site inspections.

Actual drafting in that regard should start from the outset of the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament, especially on the International Monitoring System (IMS) of remote sensors based on seismic,

hydroacoustic, radionuclide and infrasound techniques. Owing to concern about the cost-effectiveness of such a system, there appears to exist some reluctance to considering, as proposed by one delegation, the possibility of adding two more techniques to the system: satellite and electromagnetic pulse monitoring.

That drafting exercise may well be facilitated by concrete recommendations of experts on the exact number and locations of sensor stations which the four-technology network will comprise. Such recommendations are expected to result from inter-sessional work, that experts will be pursuing in the first half of December this year.

An important forward movement has also been recorded in the Ad Hoc Committee in regard to the sensitive issue of sharing the cost of the expensive IMS operation. The extent of the meeting of minds on this delicate issue offers sufficient ground to warrant an attempt to put it down in terms of precise treaty language.

It is envisaged that, like the budget of the organization to be established, these costs would be shared among States parties according to the United Nations scale of assessment, appropriately adjusted for the number of States parties to the treaty. Out of its budget, the secretariat would finance capital, operation and maintenance of IMS sensor networks. A proposal which attracts considerable interest envisages a system of credits whereby States parties could offset costs incurred earlier against their annual assessment.

On the other hand, much substantive effort and, indeed, hard work will have to go into negotiating an agreement on the other components of the verification regime, including on-site inspections and national technical means. While many delegations strongly support a supplementary role for national technical means, others oppose it on the ground that, owing to technological disparities between States parties, national technical means would give technologically-advanced States an undue edge in the compliance regime over States that are less technologically developed.

This is especially the case with respect to provisions on the mandatory on-site inspections. Much negotiating will probably still be necessary in order to overcome some of the most sticky issues. These include, for instance, the problem of finding means to reconcile the legitimate concern for preventing abusive on-site inspection requests with an equally legitimate concern for an expeditious on-site inspection procedure, especially when time-critical evidence is at stake. A separate and still contentious issue is the question of an inspection trigger mechanism. These questions, it is believed, can be resolved with more hard work as the negotiating process enters the end game. The same hard work approach may be indispensable to working out provisions on the associated confidence-building and transparency measures.

As follows from the draft rolling text, there are quite a few other outstanding problems that will need to be resolved before the final draft of the comprehensive test-ban treaty can be agreed upon and submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration and endorsement. Among them is the formula of the provision on the entry-into-force of the treaty, as well as the implementing organization and its seat. It is felt that an adequate solution of the problems of the entry-into-force should reconcile two seemingly contradictory objectives: precluding the possibility of the treaty's being held hostage to one or more States while, at the same time, ensuring its possible early entry into force and full effectiveness deriving from its support by the international community, including the key States. One possibility explored in this respect is combining a list or percentage of indispensable ratifications with the possibility of the exercise of the right of waiver.

As regards the implementing organization, after initial hesitations a view seems to prevail that the organization should be an independent entity, co located with the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna and sharing with it, on a contractual basis, some of its facilities and expertise. The Government of Austria has formally offered to host the comprehensive test-ban-treaty organization in Vienna, an offer which has been received with appreciation and is now under examination from the logistical and other points of view.

An independent implementing organization would of course mean, *inter alia*, that an agreement will have to be reached on the structure and composition of its principal bodies — in the first place, the Executive Committee. Provisions concerning the conference of States parties, the technical secretariat and the international data centre, which will constitute its integral part, will also have to be worked out in detail. While significant progress has already been made in that respect, much remains to be worked out, especially in respect of the executive council.

Let me finally add that, apart from the negotiating effort reflected in the rolling text of the comprehensive test-ban treaty, the Ad Hoc Committee has also taken steps to explore problems connected with the establishment of a preparatory commission, a supervisory body with

responsibility for the treaty in the period between its conclusion and its entry into force. This action is also a measure of our confidence that, with the continued dedication of the Ad Hoc Committee and the abiding political will of its members, the once-distant goal of a comprehensive, internationally and effectively verifiable nuclear-test-ban treaty is becoming a practical proposition that next year can become the long-overdue reality.

Mr. Osman (Afghanistan): On behalf of the delegation of Afghanistan I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee, and the other officers of the Committee on their elections as well. My delegation has confidence in your experience and diplomatic skills and wishes to assure you of its full support and cooperation in achieving the objectives set by the peace-loving international community. I should also like to pay tribute to your predecessor, Luis Valencia Rodríguez of Ecuador, who presided over the Committee during the forty-ninth session with skill and success.

Ever since the inception of the United Nations, the need to maintain international security and to save succeeding generations from war and devastation has often been expressed. Despite the growth of the potential of the United Nations — and its membership to 185 States — its efforts and peace agenda for global security have not met world-wide expectations.

However, the world community should commend the Organization on its achievements in reducing the threat of nuclear confrontation and resolving some regional conflicts through negotiated settlements, peace-keeping missions and peace-keeping operations, which have brought relative or comprehensive peace to El Salvador, Cambodia, Mozambique, Rwanda and, of late, to Bosnia and Herzegovina. I should like to quote a statement of Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the former Secretary-General, who said:

> "What often sounded as a voice in the wilderness has now gained a volume and resounding resonance that it lacked before."

Afghanistan's strategic situation has always been a major focal point of East-West competition to dominate Central and South Asia. History attests to the fact that Afghanistan has played a major role in regional peace and security, maintaining its traditional positive and constructive policy of non-alignment, and that it has also been a forerunner in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Afghanistan has actively contributed to eliminating the cold war in its 14 years of war against the former Soviet Union's aggression, which, with the help of other factors, resulted in preventing the world from becoming polarized. Thus, tranquillity and stability in Afghanistan have been a source of peace for Asia, and its disturbance and a continuation of the conflict would create turbulence throughout the entire region.

The very recent aggression and armed intervention in Afghanistan have jeopardized Afghanistan's national sovereignty. That illegal and unprovoked act of war is being engineered through the illegal and illicit supply and transfer of conventional arms to the so-called Taliban mercenaries. Any discussion about the illicit transfer of conventional arms is closely related to the problem of the mercenaries and the danger they present to the freedom and security of developing countries.

The link between illicit arms trafficking and mercenaries has two aspects: first, in some cases the mercenaries are both recruited and armed by foreign elements and, secondly, in some cases mercenaries already active are receiving illicit arms from abroad. In this connection I should like to remind members of the Committee of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries. That Convention was adopted by the General Assembly in 1989. Unfortunately, only 9 Member States have ratified it, while it requires ratification by 27 countries to enter into force.

I pay tribute to the President of the Republic of Maldives, President Gayoom, who, in his statement on 24 October 1995 at the Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, urged all Member States to ratify the Convention as a matter of priority. My delegation asks permission of the Committee to return to this question of urging more countries to join and ratify the Convention. The entry into force of the Convention will have a great impact on the limitation of the illicit transfer of conventional arms throughout the world.

Land-mines figured largely during the 14 years of the war imposed by the former Soviet Union forces on Afghanistan, resulting in millions of land-mines and massive destruction inflicted upon the people of Afghanistan. Approximately 10 million mines were laid. The impact of land-mines on agriculture, livestock and roads has been devastating in landlocked Afghanistan, which depends heavily on its transit routes. In this regard, we totally support the endeavours of the Conference on the

Convention on certain conventional weapons, which was held at Vienna late in September. We also urge continuation of the negotiations on the amendment of the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices (Protocol II), which were not concluded at that session. We have high hopes for the adoption of that amendment of the Convention because of the great impact it would have in enhancing the protection of humanity.

With regard to the question of transparency in armaments, my delegation is in favour of an enhanced level of transparency in armaments and welcomes measures the primary purpose of which is to strengthen peace and security among States in the international arena. We support the draft resolution submitted by the Netherlands (A/C.1/50/L.18) in this regard. We should, however, remember the practical difficulties experienced by countries like Afghanistan, where internal armed conflict continues, in providing information about the heavy armaments present in the positions of different forces.

Although the threat of nuclear confrontation is somewhat diminished, nuclear armaments still continue to pose a major threat to the existence of a safe world. I would like to emphasize that disarmament and the prevention of the use of force must be treated on an equal basis and that asymmetry in military and economic power is still a problem for the security of small countries.

My delegation welcomes the result of the Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) held at New York from 17 April to 12 May 1995. The indefinite extension of the NPT was a significant decision by the international community. We hope that the Treaty may become truly universal. My delegation also welcomes the results produced by START I and START II and also supports measures to bring about an early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty in the Conference on Disarmament in 1996.

My delegation regrets that there is not adequate support for maintaining the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Such Centres are essential to the maintenance of peace and the furthering of progress in developing countries.

The delegation of Afghanistan supports the appeal made by Ian Kenyon, the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

In conclusion, I appreciate the concern of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Iran, as expressed by their leaders, about recent events in Afghanistan, and I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your tireless efforts to make the work of this Committee a success.

Mr. Slokenbergs (Latvia): Mr. Chairman, allow me to congratulate you and the other officers of the Committee on your elections. I am confident that this session of the First Committee will, under your guidance, be fruitful and pragmatic.

Latvia, as an associated country of the European Union, aligns itself with the statement made by the delegation of Spain on behalf of the European Union. Thus, my delegation's comments will be brief.

Latvia considers that the European Union, together with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Western European Union, are the bulwarks of European security. Latvia's integration into these organizations will not only contribute to its own national security but will constitute an important girder in the architecture of regional and global security.

On its fiftieth anniversary, the United Nations can take credit for significant elements in the existing global-security architecture. The Organization has provided a forum for multilateral negotiations leading to the adoption of numerous instruments providing for security, confidence and disarmament in the world. Our objective now must be to continue to build on these achievements, and, more important, to implement the regional and global commitments already made.

Our principal achievement during the past year was the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Latvia was a firm supporter of the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT. At the same time, we stated that much remains to be done in the sphere of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament beyond the decision to extend the Treaty. Further, we expected that all present and future nuclear-disarmament agreements and commitments would be fully implemented with all deliberate speed. The Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament that were adopted at the NPT Conference will

be our guideposts as we pursue the dual permanent legal commitments of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

Following the New York Conference, an early test of the new non-proliferation regime will be the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Latvia expects to sign such an instrument in 1996. In the interim, all States should be aware of the loss of integrity and confidence in the non-proliferation regime that may result from the testing of nuclear weapons.

Latvia, a State not represented at the Conference on Disarmament, waits for that body to commence negotiations on a convention banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Such a cut-off agreement, together with a comprehensive test-ban treaty, will immeasurably increase confidence among all States. The negative and positive security assurances adopted by the nuclear-weapon States last spring and thereafter acknowledged by the Security Council, constitute an additional measure of confidence-building. Latvia urges further negotiations on the expansion of such measures, including the negotiation of legally binding security assurances.

Latvia learned with satisfaction that the United Kingdom, the United States and France intend to sign the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty — the Treaty of Rarotonga — during the first half of 1996. This practical step will strengthen the non-proliferation regime. It should spur other regions of the world to move towards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

With respect to other weapons of mass destruction, Latvia considers that the Convention on Chemical Weapons provides an opportunity for the international community to rid the world of an entire class of weapons. Latvia is in the process of ratifying the Convention and urges other States to follow suit, so that the Convention may enter into force at any early date.

One of the most important components of the maintenance of international peace and security is regional security and stability. Regional security can be maintained if all countries refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. Latvia hopes that all its neighbours will continue to heed this principle of the Charter.

Latvia shares the position that regional arms-control agreements are a cornerstone of the international security system. A primary concern of Latvia is the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. The integrity of that Treaty and ensuring its future viability should be matters of common concern for non-parties as well as for parties to it.

Changes recently proposed to the Treaty, if adopted, would allow an increase in the concentration of the armed forces in the regions neighbouring Latvia. We do not believe that such a development would contribute to the stability of the region. We hope that the States Parties to the Treaty will carefully consider their position before taking a decision that can influence the military balance in Europe.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia)(*interpretation from French*): I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to preside over the First Committee. We are convinced that under your enlightened leadership our work will achieve the desired results. We also extend congratulations to the other officers of the Committee.

There can be no question that at this end of the century the spectre of war between the great Powers has disappeared. Thus, the world is now living in a period of *détente* unknown since the end of the Second World War. Today, prospects of peace are encouraging and give us hope that man will at last be able to dedicate his genius and resources to the well-being of humanity.

The progress made on the international scene in the half century during which our countries have been spared the horrors of a global war should, however, neither cloud reality nor allow us to forget that the end of the cold war has not been synonymous with peace and harmony everywhere.

Paradoxically, we are even witnessing an unleashing of the most primal feelings, which are giving free rein to manifestations of xenophobia and narrow nationalism and which have sometimes even unleashed the demon of tribalism. Many regions of the world have thus been engulfed in fire and blood, and virtually no continent has been spared.

This reveals the shortcomings of a concept of security which would limit the basis and extent of it to the absence of armed conflict between the big Powers. Indeed, without denying the military dimension of the security concept, we believe that today's world requires a more global vision and

a more dynamic approach, one that can take into account the economic, social, human and environmental aspects of security.

Taking all these components simultaneously into account will enable us to grasp the question in all its complexity. However global it may be, our concept should not oversimplify, because it must encompass in a dynamic dialectics the many components of security that come together in cause and effect. That approach is the only one, we believe, that can contribute to the development of a global programme for the establishment of a new order for peace and development.

Arms control and disarmament clearly represent an essential component of this endeavour. In that connection, the important event this year has been the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). That instrument, whose importance needs no proof, would have its credibility enhanced with greater adherence by United Nations Member States to ensure its universality.

The NPT, the importance of which we all recognize, will be made stronger by the genuine implementation of the decisions adopted at the Review Conference of the NPT in May 1995, which deal, respectively, with the Strengthening of the Review Process and the Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, including universality, security guarantees and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Along the same lines, Tunisia notes with satisfaction the progress made in the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, and we hope that such a treaty can be signed before the fifty-first session of the General Assembly.

Another point I would like to raise involves the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. This is an instrument of whose importance we are well aware. It will be recalled that this is the first international legal test that provides for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. Tunisia was one of the first to sign the Convention. The ratification procedure will be carried out once the preparatory steps for submission to our legislature have been completed. We believe that this instrument should be fully implemented by all Member States in order to ensure the required universality.

The interest the international community has shown in questions involving weapons of mass destruction should, however, not conceal the problems presented by the existence, development and trend towards the proliferation of conventional weapons.

While intra-State conflicts and local hotbeds of tension are far from being wiped out at this end of the century, the untargeted use of land-mines is raising more and more questions with regard to the use of such deadly devices, whose victims are usually among the civilian population. At the Vienna Conference in October 1955, which dealt with this question, participants expressed their disapproval of the use of these mutilating weapons, which inflict lasting damage on the economies of the countries where they are deployed. Disapproval of the blind use of land-mines is all the more legitimate given the fact that even after the cessation of hostilities between belligerent parties the use of land-mines delays the resumption of economic activities in the mine-infested areas.

None the less, Tunisia regrets that the unanimity that prevailed in condemning the large-scale use of land-mines was not translated into a consensus text that would have strengthened Protocol II of the United Nations Convention on certain conventional weapons. One step in the right direction, namely, the strengthening of international humanitarian law, was taken with the drafting of Protocol IV, which prohibits the use of blinding laser weapons.

In another context, and in the framework of strengthening confidence-building measures among States, Tunisia appreciates anything that contributes to transparency in relevant data on military potential. In this respect, we believe that the implementation of the idea that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms would have greater impact were it to include data on other types of weapons, including those emanating from national production. Therefore, the experts who will meet in 1997 to study the question of the Register should take into account the concerns that have been expressed, particularly with regard to broadening the field of application of the Register.

The question of expanding the membership of the Conference on Disarmament continues to be of the utmost importance to my country. We believe that countries that wish to participate in this, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, should be able to have access to it.

Still on the question of arms control, but at the regional level, the role played by the three United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament deserves to be emphasized. Their closure, which is being envisaged for financial reasons, seems to us inopportune, especially at a time when the regional dimension of disarmament is beginning to be better understood.

In this connection Tunisia would like to express its satisfaction at the progress made towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. During its chairmanship of the Organization of African Unity, Tunisia spared no effort in working to attain that objective, and we were gratified by the adoption of the Treaty of Pelindaba on the establishment of a denuclearized zone in Africa, which occurred at the sixty-second Meeting of Heads of State and Government held at Addis Ababa in June 1995. That Treaty is a necessary complement to the Treaties of Rarotonga and Tlatelolco. These enterprises in the southern hemisphere represent a further step towards the attainment of the ultimate objective of complete nuclear disarmament.

Tunisia is pleased at the decision by France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America to sign the relevant protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga in the first half of 1996, and we hope that similar support will be evidenced once the protocols annexed to the Treaty of Pelindaba are ready for signature.

Convinced as we are that this endeavour is appropriate, we in Africa intend to work towards the establishment of a treaty establishing a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction on our continent.

The Near East, an area important to the security of the region of which Tunisia is a part, should also benefit from this momentum towards the creation of further nuclear-weapon-free zones. Within the framework of the peace process, Tunisia is actively participating in the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security and has always supported the plan to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, one free of weapons of mass destruction, and has always called upon Israel to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to place its facilities under the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The establishment of a denuclearized zone in that region will create a climate conducive to the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

In the context of its regional security policy, Tunisia is cooperating to this end with other fraternal and friendly countries in order to make the Mediterranean area a sea of peace and to promote the emergence of a Euro-Mediterranean region that will be both integrated and prosperous. In that spirit, Tunisia has continually called for a Mediterranean dialogue aimed at establishing multidimensional and multifaceted cooperation. One of the basic components of that process is a policy of dialogue among the countries on both shores of the Mediterranean. In that connection, on 28 and 29 July 1995 at Tabarka, Tunisia acted as host to a special meeting of the Mediterranean Forum. That meeting made it possible for participants to take the necessary action to promote mutual understanding and to give to the meeting scheduled for next November in Spain a better chance of success.

We are convinced that the Barcelona meeting will bring us further along the way to agreement and understanding among the States of the region. This cooperation, in the broadest sense of the word, augments and strengthens the foundations for establishing in the Mediterranean a zone of peace, stability and prosperity.

Mr. Hasan (Iraq)(*interpretation from Arabic*): I take pleasure, at the outset, in conveying to you, Mr. Chairman, my most sincere congratulations on your election to preside over the First Committee at this historic session. We are confident that your long experience and the outstanding role of your country in the area of disarmament will be an earnest of the success of the Committee's work. My congratulations go also to the other officers of the Committee.

The United Nations was born in the same year that witnessed the use of nuclear weapons against Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Fifty years later, nuclear weapons continue to be a source of major concern to the international community. The existence of nuclear weapons means that the risk that they may be used does exist. When it comes to these frightful weapons, no one can pretend that whether or not they may be used will depend on who possesses them, especially in view of the fact that policies of nuclear deterrence do exist and that credible security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States do not exist.

This year, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was extended indefinitely. In the view of my country and of many other countries, this indefinite extension and the manner in which it was achieved will not serve the Treaty's objectives, particularly that of nuclear disarmament as contained in Article VI thereof. The brief period that has passed since then has given us many indications which demonstrate the validity of

this view. Nuclear tests are still being carried out. We have not yet seen any substantive effort to give guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States that those weapons will not be used against them or that the Treaty will be universally adhered to. Neither has there been any indication that a timetable for the elimination of nuclear weapons is in the offing. This situation makes it incumbent upon nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty to fulfil their obligations in this regard so as to preserve the Treaty's credibility as well as the credibility of the non-proliferation regime as a whole.

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an important step towards achieving the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and, ultimately, of nuclear disarmament itself, particularly in a region as the Middle East, which suffers from a serious security imbalance due to Israel's possession of nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles. The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones free from all other weapons of mass destruction in any region will always depend, primarily, on the efforts of the region's States, but in the case of the Middle East, there is a more compelling factor namely, the role of the Security Council and the responsibility it bears towards the establishment of the nuclear-weapon-free zone.

In its resolution 487 (1981), the Security Council called upon Israel:

> "urgently to place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency" (*resolution 487 (1981), para. 5*)

This is the only case in the world in which the Security Council had to demand from a State to subject its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Furthermore, Security Council resolution 687 (1991), adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter, takes note that actions to be taken by Iraq with regard to certain categories of weapons:

> "represent steps towards the goals of establishing in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and all missiles for their delivery". (*resolution 687 (1991), para. 14*)

Moreover, in his report (S/22871/Rev.1) on the monitoring and verification Plan for Iraq's implementation of resolution 687 (1991) — which was drafted by the General Assembly and adopted in Security Council resolution 715 (1991) under Chapter VII of the Charter — the Secretary-General points out in paragraph 4 that the implementation of the Plan will contribute to the creation of an environment conducive to achieving the goal of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It should be noted that all the resolutions on the extension of the non-proliferation Treaty also mention paragraph 14 of resolution 687 (1991) in the context of the call for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The Security Council must ensure the implementation of its resolutions, particularly paragraph 14 of resolution 687 (1991), the only article concerning which the Council has adopted no implementation measures. The fact that Israel's nuclear weapons have remained beyond the concerns of the Security Council poses a serious threat to regional and international peace and security and represents dereliction on the Council's part with regard to the implementation of these resolutions.

Since 1989, my country has been an Observer in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. My country was among the first to apply for membership in the Conference out of its awareness of that body's importance as the only multilateral forum for negotiations in the field of disarmament. My delegation shares the concerns voiced by the 23 States candidates for membership of the Conference. Indeed, two years after the presentation by Ambassador O'Sullivan of his list, the Conference's membership has not been expanded despite the adoption by the General Assembly of two resolutions — resolutions 48/77 B and 49/77 B — in which it called upon the Conference on Disarmament to expand its membership. This is due to the fact that one State alone continues to prevent consensus in this regard. We hope that it will ultimately prove possible to achieve this consensus at the beginning of the Conference's 1996 session.

Statistics show that 25 million people have been killed in wars that have broken out since the end of World War II. Statistics also show that, approximately, a similar number of human beings die every year from hunger and lack of medication. This grim situation makes it necessary for us to integrate the concepts of disarmament in a broader concept of international peace and security.

A particular responsibility is borne in this regard by those States which are major arms exporters. Such States should divert their export-oriented military industries to civilian production and should finance the process of development in developing countries. This is the only way to ensure lasting stability throughout the world.

The Chairman: I now call on the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Martino (Holy See): I wish to offer the congratulations and best wishes of the Holy See on your election, Sir, to the chairmanship of this important Committee. Under your expert and competent guidance, the work of this Committee will proceed speedily and smoothly and lead to fruitful conclusions. The congratulations of the Holy See extend also to the members of the Bureau.

The theme of my remarks today, during this fiftieth anniversary year of the United Nations, is the hope for a peaceful future to which everyone on the planet has a right. During his visit to the United Nations a few days ago, Pope John Paul II cautioned the international community to reject fear for and of the future. The threat of nuclear war has been one cause of such fear. As His Holiness noted:

> "That danger, mercifully, appears to have receded." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 20th meeting, p. 5)*

However, he added:

> "Everything that might make it return needs to be rejected firmly and universally." (*ibid.*)

As long as nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are maintained and the proliferation of such weapons threatens the peace of many regions of the world, there will be a fear of the future. Rebuilding the hope of people everywhere calls for a major commitment on the part of the international community to disarmament, in particular in the field of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

Now that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has been extended indefinitely — that is, made permanent — the international legal barrier to the proliferation of nuclear weapons is strengthened. It is not enough merely to extend the life of the Treaty indefinitely. A legal obligation exists to comply with what the Treaty is intended to do: prevent both the horizontal and the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. The obligation of the 178 States Parties to the NPT to negotiate nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control is reinforced.

The package of three texts on principles, the review process and the decision on extension adopted by the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the NPT opens the way to eliminating nuclear weapons within the shortest possible time-frame. It is now urgent that the Conference on Disarmament redouble its efforts to produce by 1996 a comprehensive treaty that will end all nuclear tests by all countries in all environments. Such a comprehensive test-ban treaty would augur well for the fourth special session on disarmament, in 1997.

It is also necessary to focus public attention again on stopping the widespread production, distribution and use of inhumane weapons, such as anti-personnel land-mines. More than 100 million land-mines are buried in many countries; 25,000 people, many of them children, are killed or maimed every year by these horrible devices. The disappointing results of the recent Conference in Vienna on this subject ought to embolden, not dishearten, this Committee, which must not lose its determination to protect civilians from the indiscriminate effects of land-mines. The Holy See appeals once more to all Governments, especially those in industrialized countries, to allocate more financial resources for mine clearance and to assist the victims of these inhumane weapons. This Committee should make it a high order of business to press for a prohibition on the production, trade, transfer and use of such weapons.

The next millennium will shortly arrive. We must not be afraid of the future. We must build a civilization worthy of the human person. Let us hope with the Holy Father that the tears of this century will have prepared the ground for a new springtime of the human spirit.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): At the outset, Sir, please accept the sincere felicitations of the Pakistan delegation on your election to preside over this important Committee. Your profound knowledge and long experience in the field of disarmament will contribute immensely to the realization of concrete progress on vital issues at the fiftieth anniversary session. I also take this opportunity to congratulate other members of our Bureau. May I also take this opportunity to express our high appreciation for the great competence and skill with which your predecessor, Ambassador Luiz Valencia Rodríguez of Ecuador, guided the work of the Committee last year.

The historic deliberations of our leaders on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations have confirmed the dramatic ways in which the world has changed in the past few years. The threat of a global nuclear holocaust has receded beyond the horizon. The nuclear arsenals of the two largest nuclear States are being reduced significantly. The entire southern hemisphere may soon be covered by adjacent nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction may soon come into force. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has been extended indefinitely and has gained ever wider adherence. A comprehensive test-ban treaty (CTBT) may be around the corner. There is hope that the world will soon be a safer place.

But the threats to world peace and the possibility of catastrophe have not been eliminated. The dangerous stability of mutual assured destruction has been replaced by a less fearsome, but more uncertain and unstable, multipolar world, a world in rapid transition to an unknown destination. The end of the cold war has released long-repressed national and ethnic aspirations and precipitated festering disputes in various regions. The quest for global domination and regional hegemony still inspires the policies of some States.

In these circumstances, disarmament measures — nuclear and conventional, global and regional — are more necessary than ever before. As stipulated in the Final Document of the First Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament, the lead must be taken by the States with the largest military arsenals and other militarily significant States and the first priority must continue to be accorded to nuclear disarmament.

In the post-cold-war era, nuclear disarmament is more feasible and, at the same time, imperative. The nuclear Powers do not need nuclear weapons to defend themselves against each other and they certainly do not need them against the non-nuclear-weapon States. If nuclear weapons are retained, the world will have to develop a complex system of multipolar deterrence, in which the danger of miscalculation and accident would be much greater than in the bipolar deterrence of the cold war. It is important for the world community to act now, while there are no strategic confrontations among the five nuclear Powers, to ban nuclear weapons and to agree on a specific programme for their phased reduction and eventual elimination.

The argument that significant reductions are being made by the United States and the Russian Federation is not sufficient reason to avoid multilateral action for nuclear disarmament. Even after the agreed reductions under START II, once it is ratified by both Parties, the 3000 nuclear warheads retained by each side will be sufficient to destroy the world several times over. We are also disturbed that, while downsizing their nuclear arsenals, the nuclear-weapon States are upgrading them qualitatively. They have argued boldly that they will keep their nuclear weapons in operational readiness against unknown threats. These are the ingredients of future disaster.

Pakistan believes that the international community should take the following steps: first, secure solemn and binding commitments from the nuclear-weapon States that they will never use their nuclear weapons and that they will progressively reduce and eventually eliminate them; secondly, as proposed at the recent summit meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement, they will commence negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament, as a matter of priority, on an international convention for the prohibition of nuclear weapons and their phased reduction and eventual elimination within a specific time-frame. This was envisaged in paragraph 50 *(c)* of the Final Document of first special session devoted to disarmament.

Pakistan has advocated the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty for over 30 years as a means of halting the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and preventing their proliferation. For Pakistan, and indeed for most of the world, it has always been self-evident that a nuclear test ban should be total and complete, since any loophole could be exploited to defeat the purpose of the prohibition. Yet, in the course of two years of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, the nuclear-weapon States have argued that an exception be made for so-called safety and reliability tests. Separate talks were held among the five nuclear-weapon States to agree on the threshold of such tests, ranging from a few kilograms to hundreds of kilotons. We are happy that France, the United States and the United Kingdom have declared their acceptance of a zero-yield comprehensive test-ban treaty that would prohibit any nuclear-weapon test explosion or any other explosion. China has long proposed a "no energy release" ban on nuclear-explosion tests.

Yet, the fact is that, so far, there is no agreement on the central issue of the scope of the comprehensive test-ban treaty. The United States, France and the United Kingdom declared their support for the Australian formulation on the scope of the treaty before and after their acceptance of the zero-yield ban. Therefore, a question remains whether the Australian formula, which has gathered considerable support, is sufficiently comprehensive to ensure against the conduct of nuclear testing in ways that are technically excluded from the test ban or are simply undetectable.

Apart from the scope of the treaty, there are a large number of issues on which difficult negotiations lie ahead, especially on the verification regime. Pakistan supports an

effective, non-discriminatory and non-selective international verification system that would create equal access, rights and obligations for all States parties. We believe that the International Monitoring System, the procedures for on-site inspections and the use of national technical means must be evolved within the framework of these principles, which are widely endorsed in the Conference on Disarmament. On-site inspections should be rare, non-intrusive, effective and cost-efficient. We are opposed to the use of so-called national technical means, which are not part of the recognized monitoring network, since these would erode the credibility of the International Monitoring System and may amount to endorsing questionable external interference in the sovereign affairs of States.

Pakistan shares the sentiment that we should seek the earliest possible conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty in 1996. We shall participate positively to realize this. But the treaty must secure a genuine consensus on the outstanding issues.

While considerable progress was made in the Conference on Disarmament this year in the test-ban negotiations, the Conference could not undertake work on the other issues on its agenda. On 6 April 1995 speaking in the Conference, I stated, *inter alia*:

> "We must seriously consider whether the linkages that were created between the various issues constitute a precedent or a practice that will advance the work of this Conference in future."

Subsequently, when the Group of 21 insisted on the establishment of a negotiating mechanism on nuclear disarmament as part of the package, the early proponents of linkage became disenchanted with this negotiating device, which has now been described as a formula for paralysis. No State or group should seek to impose its unilateral position on the rest of the members of the Conference on Disarmament's membership. All the items on the Conference's agenda must be addressed in a balanced manner reflecting global priorities.

Much has been said here and elsewhere about the fissile materials issue. As originally proposed by Canada and endorsed for years by the General Assembly, the objective was to halt the production of fissile materials and gradually reduce stockpiles, thus serving the goals both of non-proliferation and of nuclear disarmament. Freezing nuclear stockpiles at their present unequal levels will not serve either goal. To freeze such a disparity is not only unfair — it could also be dangerous in certain regions of the world. There are many other problems, for example uncontrolled or loosely controlled stockpiles and disposal of fissionable material released from dismantled nuclear weapons, which a simple cut-off will not address.

Despite these concerns, Pakistan accepted the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on the basis of Ambassador Shannon's report, since it does not prejudge the scope of the convention on fissile materials. We look forward to commencing work on this subject as soon as possible, together with work on other issues on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. We continue to hope that, regarding the scope of the treaty on fissile materials, our concerns will evoke a more positive response from the proponents of the cut-off.

It is unfortunate that the Conference on Disarmament was unable to reestablish the Ad Hoc Committee on Security Assurances this year. It is equally regrettable that the Conference, the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, was excluded from the consideration of Security Council resolution 984 (1995) offering positive and negative assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the NPT. The resolution is inconsistent with the United Nations Charter. The right to individual and collective self-defence is available to every State, not only to States Parties to the NPT or any other treaty. The Charter offers assistance to all States, both through and outside the Security Council, in case they are subjected to the use of force or aggression with nuclear or other weapons. In any event, resolution 984 (1995) does not offer real security even to the States to which it is addressed. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament will undertake serious negotiations next year to conclude an international convention extending categorical, unconditional and universal assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States.

It is unfortunate that the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to address the issue of conventional weapons comprehensively. It has done so only in the context of transparency. We believe that a supply-side approach is unlikely to promote the goals of conventional arms control and international stability. One-sided control of the transfer of arms cannot redress the imbalance within sensitive regions of the world. Discriminatory embargoes have in many cases enhanced the threat to peace, accentuated the danger of proliferation and frustrated initiatives for disarmament and non-proliferation. Conventional arms control must address the root causes of insecurity emanating from disputes, conflicts and perceptions of a threat. Conventional arms control must seek to promote balance and security among all the regional

States concerned. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament will find it possible to evolve such a comprehensive approach to promote conventional arms control and disarmament in the future.

Pakistan has consistently supported the desire of a number of States to assume membership of the Conference on Disarmament. We were prepared to accept the 23 countries proposed by Ambassador O'Sullivan for membership in 1993. We would have hoped that, instead of the two-stage process evolved painstakingly by the President of the Conference, the Ambassador of Morocco, the Conference would have immediately admitted the 23 States. We hope that this will happen at the start of the 1996 session. Pakistan cannot endorse any procedure which would seek to impose limitations on the rights and obligations of Conference membership on one or more of the 23 States.

Pakistan has participated actively in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on land-mines and in the First Review Conference of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects. The millions of indiscriminately used mines threaten civilian populations in over 60 countries. There must be a global commitment to remove these mines, especially those in the developing countries. We are disappointed that the Vienna Conference adjourned without success in amending the Protocol on land-mines. The progress made was insufficient. However, the understandings reached during the last few days of the Conference provide a sound basis for completing the Protocol when the Conference resumes next year.

We have also participated in the Ad Hoc Group of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. We believe that the difficulties involved in devising a verification regime for the Convention, which may involve intrusive on-site inspections, are well recognized. The mandate of the Group can be fulfilled through systematic work progressively to establish objective criteria and a practical approach for the verification of various substances as well as the implementation of the provisions of the Convention regarding scientific and technological cooperation.

Pakistan endorses the significance of the decision adopted by the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the NPT to extend the Treaty indefinitely. The manner in which this decision was achieved and the failure of the Conference for the third time to adopt an agreed final document reviewing the operation of the Treaty are indications of the fragility of the consensus upon which observance of the Treaty rests. The indefinite extension of the NPT cannot imply the indefinite division of the world into two classes of States: nuclear and non-nuclear.

Pakistan believes that the NPT is a factor for international stability. We are glad that the Treaty has been extended. This does not imply that we can overlook the discriminatory character of the Treaty — and, in view of our security concerns, which arise principally from threats within our region, Pakistan cannot accede to the NPT unilaterally.

South Asia has been described as the most dangerous place in the world. This Committee is well aware of the efforts made by Pakistan ever since 1972 — when former Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto called for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia — to hold back nuclear proliferation in our region. Despite this, Pakistan was consistently subjected to discriminatory restraints and pressure. The entire Pakistani nation has demonstrated its firm determination to resist and reverse such discriminatory measures.

As in other regions of the world, the cardinal guiding principle for the promotion of stability in South Asia must be balance and symmetry. A solution to the dilemma of peace and security in South Asia can be promoted by addressing, simultaneously and integrally, three interrelated issues.

The first is a solution to the underlying disputes and causes of tension between Pakistan and India, first and foremost the Kashmir dispute. The suppression of the Kashmiri struggle for self-determination must be halted and an effective modality found to promote a genuine dialogue to resolve this core issue justly and peacefully in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council.

The second involves agreements on conventional arms control and confidence-building measures. Pakistan has proposed a mutually agreed ratio of forces between itself and India, steps to ensure against a surprise attack, and the adoption of agreed principles for arms control in the region.

The third issue relates to mutually acceptable non-proliferation arrangements. Pakistan's proposals for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, for simultaneous

acceptance of the NPT and for comprehensive safeguards have not been accepted by our neighbour so far. We hope that they will eventually find acceptance. Meanwhile, it seems necessary to explore equitable, non-discriminatory and acceptable ways and means to promote mutual restraint in South Asia and avoid a disastrous arms race, conventional or non-conventional.

In this context, Pakistan is deeply concerned about the impending threat posed by the planned production and deployment of ballistic missiles against Pakistan. This fateful step, once taken, will transform an already tense situation in South Asia into a hair-trigger security environment. Pakistan will be obliged to take appropriate steps to respond to this new and qualitatively enhanced threat to its security. We suggest, once again, consideration of our proposal to create a zero-missile zone in South Asia.

Last year the United States proposed multilateral talks on security, arms control and non-proliferation in South Asia. The comprehensive approach of the United States proposal offers a realistic mechanism for addressing the interlinked security problems of South Asia. We hope that proposal will be promoted actively and accepted by all of the proposed participants.

The prospects of peace and security in our region are strongly intertwined with the evolution of a stable structure of international peace and security based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, on just solutions to conflicts and disputes, on balanced arms control and on general and complete disarmament. Pakistan will participate actively in the Assembly, in the Conference on Disarmament and other bodies, together with other Member States, to build such a new, just and durable structure of international peace and security.

Mr. Berguño (Chile)(*interpretation from Spanish*): I would like to express to you and to the other officers of the Committee our warmest congratulations on your election. I am completely confident that with your diplomatic experience and under your expert guidance our deliberations will be fruitful. May I express my sincere congratulations to your predecessor, Ambassador Valencia Rodriguez of Ecuador, for the work that he accomplished, as well as my thanks for the efficient support we have always received from the Secretariat.

This year's session of the First Committee is taking place in the broader context of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. This occasion is an appropriate one on which to reflect on the achievement of the past and to evaluate the present situation in the sphere of disarmament and international security so as to draw up a balance sheet on the basis of that reflection and to plan our future course of action with confidence and knowledge.

It is a fact that we have made a rather substantial advance in our thinking on specific disarmament issues and that we have moved across the dangerous line of confrontation towards a more complex labyrinth in which the options for greater progress are broad and open. However, fundamental tasks remain, tasks that are more complex and more challenging than ever, given the new international context of a broadened concept of security.

Confronting a new challenge does not automatically entail giving up the principles and objectives that inspired our actions in past decades. The need for a more comprehensive and more effective strategy to reverse the arms race and to achieve our goals of arms reduction and disarmament through multilateral mechanisms, as defined at the first, second and third special sessions devoted to disarmament, continues to exist. I believe that the time has come to lay the groundwork for a fourth special session, which we hope might be held in 1997.

That hope is based on the premise that the impasse that exists in the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission will be replaced by a dialogue initiated here in the First Committee that will demonstrate our political will to reach solid agreement not only on the questions involved in the Agenda for Disarmament but also on steps to be taken to attain specific objectives within negotiated timetables and parameters. The mechanical and sterile reiteration of preconceived positions, as the representative of Brazil has mentioned, will get us nowhere.

We need to reflect on the need to resolve a basic contradiction, which is reflected in the fact that the First Committee and the plenary General Assembly adopt resolutions by consensus or broad majorities but that their implementation cannot be guaranteed within the institutional mechanisms set up to deal with multilateral disarmament issues. The Conference on Disarmament has advanced towards the comprehensive test-ban treaty through sustained but slow efforts, and it has failed to begin negotiations on a convention prohibiting the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. It has been unable to establish its usual ad hoc committees on prevention of an arms race in outer space, on negative guarantees to non-nuclear States and on transparency in weaponry. For its part, the Disarmament Commission has

been unable to make progress in two out of its three working groups. We are grateful for efforts to reverse that trend, and we hope that the new Chairman will have some measure of success in that endeavour.

The gap between the process of adopting General Assembly resolutions and their follow-up in the context of multilateral institutions represents the greatest weakness facing us today. At its forty-ninth session the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution 49/77 B, on the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. As the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament must be a body that is representative and that reflects today's realities. It needs to be enlarged, but in fact it has become smaller and less representative, since many nations that used to be covered by the former Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, are no longer members. The decision that the Conference on Disarmament has now taken, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Ambassador Benjelloun-Tuimi of Morocco, is a welcome step in the right direction. However, it is in fact but a small step, since all it does is to adopt a report, issued by Ambassador O'Sullivan of Australia in 1993, establishing the composition of the Conference but delaying its implementation to some future date to be determined by the Conference itself.

Some speakers have viewed that decision as insufficient, not only because of its undetermined date of applicability but also because the universe of candidate countries is now broader than the one envisaged in the O'Sullivan report. In fact, the list proposed by Ambassador O'Sullivan is a balanced addition to the present composition of the Conference on Disarmament. It takes in regions that are either insufficiently represented, or not represented, of Scandinavia, Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, the Middle East, southern and western Africa, Asia, including the Korean Peninsula and Indochina, Oceania and South America. In accordance with the text of resolution 49/77 B, the legitimate aspirations of all candidate countries must be taken into account, but those aspirations can only be met when the Conference on Disarmament reestablishes its regular procedures for expansion, which were broken off in 1978, and that will require, as a prerequisite, the complete implementation of its decision of 21 September 1995.

Disarmament and non-proliferation have been the focus of attention for some time now, and important advances were made in 1995. After several years of preparation, the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), decided at the Review and Extension Conference to make it indefinite. My country was satisfied with that result and completed the process of its own accession to the NPT shortly thereafter. It has been our understanding that the principles and objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, as well as measures designed to strengthen the NPT review process, are an integral part of the decision to extend it indefinitely.

In essence, the three are inseparable. The decision on extension solemnly proclaims the political will to oppose proliferation now and for ever. The decision on periodic reviews makes nuclear and non-nuclear States alike more responsible for the fulfilment of the objectives of the Treaty. The decision on Principles represents a starting-point for a gradual programme for the eventual but complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

In the "Principles and Objectives", it was decided that the negotiations for a comprehensive test-ban treaty should be completed no later than 1996. In response to these aspirations, in addition to the usual resolution supporting the comprehensive treaty, we are a co-sponsor of a draft resolution calling for an immediate end to all nuclear testing. The controversy surrounding the moratorium, as well as the resumption and continuation of these tests in the period prior to the entry into force of the treaty, must come to an end but it must end with acceptance of the will of the world community to put an end to nuclear tests. Thus, the adoption by the General Assembly of a resolution containing this political mandate is now indispensable.

The conclusion of the negotiations on the prohibition of testing will be the first step in the implementation of these Principles and Objectives. The announcement by France, the United States and the United Kingdom that they intend to subscribe to a zero-option treaty has removed certain potential difficulties to the verification of a convention on total prohibition. We urge the other nuclear-weapon States unequivocally to make the same commitment. But we need to begin intensive work to eliminate the production of fissile materials for military purposes, reflecting in deed the recommendations of Ambassador Shannon of Canada. We must also obtain universal and binding security assurances and greater transparency in export controls, which should gradually become multilateral in structure and scope. The peaceful uses of nuclear energy for development purposes need to become more widespread and the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards need to be strengthened. We are deeply committed to such a programme of action and have already made an important contribution to it.

The decision on Principles and Objectives contains certain paragraphs supporting the development of nuclear-weapon-free zones and on the next steps to be taken to protect non-nuclear States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. These paragraphs help to offset the existing imbalance in the Non-Proliferation Treaty between the goals of non-proliferation and the aspirations to achieve total disarmament, as contained in article VI, and that of respecting the sovereign will of non-nuclear States and the regions that wish to remain free of nuclear weapons and their threat, in accordance with article VII.

In this respect, there have been a number of decisive developments. First, the Treaty of Tlatelolco system has been consolidated through amendments, the process of the gradual accession of all States within its area of application, and the extension by all nuclear States of the security assurances required by the Protocols to the Treaty.

Secondly, the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity adopted the Pelindaba text of the Treaty establishing Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. As with the Treaties of Tlatelolco and Rarotonga, we urge the nuclear States to give their complete support to the African Treaty and to ensure that its respective Protocols are signed as soon as possible.

On 20 October 1995, the Governments of France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America issued a joint declaration on their intention to sign the respective Protocols of the Treaty of Rarotonga in the first half of 1996.

The United States, the Russian Federation and other Powers have thrown their support behind the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East and South-East Asia and, in general, behind the very concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone as a valuable tool in the process of maintaining peace throughout the world.

The expansion of a nuclear-weapon-free zone throughout the southern hemisphere has been welcomed, promoted and supported by the gradual establishment in many regions of zones of peace and cooperation. Such zones, understood as geographical areas defined by the participants themselves, contribute to global peace and security by establishing regional norms of cooperation and coexistence. We would ask the Secretary-General to begin consultations with Governments on the options available simultaneously for strengthening nuclear-weapon-free zones, promoting zones of peace in those and adjacent areas, and considering reciprocal relations between the two types of zones, and that he report thereon to the General Assembly next year.

The sad memory of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki prompted Chile's Minister for Foreign Affairs to urge that, as a tribute to the victims, we intensify our efforts aimed at achieving the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Last year, to that end Japan introduced a draft resolution that we support and hope will receive appropriate follow-up. The approach to our ultimate goal should be rooted in the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. But a degree of realism and a gradual and progressive adoption of concrete measures should mark every step on the road to genuine nuclear disarmament.

Other weapons of mass destruction have also been the subjects of significant progress. The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction remain subject to parallel but different exercises aimed at their full implementation. In connection with the Chemical Weapons Convention, the gradual but sometimes difficult path towards the establishment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is the main objective of the negotiations taking place in the Preparatory Commission at The Hague. In the context of the Biological Weapons Convention, the Ad Hoc Committee set up by the Special Conference has begun its work in Geneva, which should lead to a verification system and other measures, including those related to article X, aimed at strengthening its application under the Convention. As in the nuclear field, we perceive the need here to pursue the twofold objective of non-proliferation and technological access.

Together with other States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects or, as in our case, States that are in the process of acceding to it, we were extremely disappointed at the failure at the Vienna Review Conference to agree on the text of a protocol on land-mines. This failure cannot easily be offset by the imperfect Protocol on blinding laser weapons. We hope that the final sessions of the Geneva Conference will prove more fruitful. In this case, we can again see a gap between the repeated requests of the General Assembly and the political realities of intergovernmental negotiations. It is our hope that the General Assembly will moderate its demands and that the negotiating parties will move forward

with greater resolve to respond to, or reach a compromise with, these demands.

I have two final comments in the context of conventional disarmament. We welcome the decision to convene in 1997 a group of governmental experts to report to the Secretary-General on the operations and future improvement of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Until this process leads to some progress on this difficult subject, the resumption of the Conference on Disarmament's Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments could make a useful contribution to a more thorough consideration of the Register and, we would hope, to timely progress towards its consolidation.

I have one last but no less important observation. In the area of transparency, global measures can be usefully complemented by sustained regional efforts. In 1993, we were a cosponsor of resolution 48/75 G, which endorsed the value of guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament and their function within the context of global security.

In November, Chile will be the venue of the Regional Seminar on Confidence-building Measures, which will be held at Santiago in accordance with a decision adopted by the Organization of American States. That meeting will attempt, within the specific context of regional security, to decide in a constructive way on a certain number of confidence-building measures, and it will contribute to meeting the universal aspiration for sustainable development within a secure world based on stability and regional cooperation.

Mr. Mongbé (Benin)(*interpretation from French*): On behalf of the delegation of Benin, I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your well-deserved election to preside over the First Committee at the fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. I am convinced that thanks to your proven talents, which were so amply demonstrated in the Disarmament Commission, our deliberations will work in the interests of the peace and security of all, and I should like to assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation.

I should also like to take this opportunity to pay a well-deserved tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Valencia Rodríguez of Ecuador, who so competently and intelligently presided over our work at the forty-ninth session. We should also like to congratulate, through you, the other officers of the Committee and to pay a tribute to all the members of the Secretariat who assist you in your work.

The era of peace and cooperation in which we have been living since the end of the planetary rivalry of the cold war affords us an opportunity to make real progress in the process of general and complete disarmament.

That conviction has been confirmed by recent developments in this sphere at various levels of the international arena, and we can only welcome such significant events as, *inter alia*, the entry into force of START I on 5 December 1995, following the Ukraine's decision to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); the signing by Cuba of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which has been thereby strengthened; the suspension of North Korea's decision to withdraw from the NPT; Mongolia's unilateral decision to become a nuclear-weapon-free zone; decision, on 12 May 1995 on the extension of the NPT, which has created a legal barrier to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and, lastly, the prospects for a conclusion by the Conference on Disarmament of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations has been reflected in a renewal of the commitment of all nations to our world Organization, whose goal is to unite us all in working for peace and development based on the principles of justice, dignity and prosperity for all. We must therefore resolutely pursue our common and concerted efforts to bring about a world free from all types of weapons, the stockpiling of which is an impediment to harmonious development.

As was reiterated in the Final Declaration of the eleventh summit meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held recently at Cartagena, Colombia, the arms race, which has swallowed up a large part of the human financial, material and technical resources of today's world, places a heavy burden on the economies of all nations. Further, one can never overemphasize the alarming nature of the striking contrast between the global level of military expenditures and the repercussions of underdevelopment, with the accompanying poverty and hardship that are the daily lot of over two thirds of mankind.

The elimination of the aggressive capabilities of States cannot but help us to realize substantial peace dividends to be devoted to the financing of development, the very foundation of peace.

At this session we must therefore give serious thought to the following urgent matters: first, nuclear disarmament, which includes consolidating the international non-proliferation regime by respecting the commitments undertaken by all States Parties to the NPT, the promotion of implementation of the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the cessation and ultimate prohibition of nuclear tests, a ban on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes and on the dumping of radioactive wastes, and promotion of and support for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world, particularly in Africa.

Secondly, we must consider the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical and biological weapons; we must pay particular attention to the implementation of the Convention on Chemical Weapons, which is scheduled to enter into force in 1995, thereby contributing to the use of chemical technology and products for peaceful purposes of socio-economic development, while we must also try to strengthen arrangements for verification of the implementation of the Convention on Biological Weapons.

Thirdly, we must consider conventional disarmament, which includes not only the imperative need for a ban on the manufacture and use of anti-personnel land-mines, which claim millions of victims, including innocent women and children, especially in the developing countries, but also the expansion of the applicability of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which should make it possible to dispel the anxiety, fear and suspicion that lead to an excessive stockpiling of armaments and increase the risks of military confrontations and regional conflicts.

In the context of our common endeavour we must encourage international cooperation in all possible uses of science and advanced technology for both military and civilian purposes — so-called dual-use — through the transfer and exchange of scientific and technical know-how for the peaceful purposes of promoting sustainable development and the preservation of international security.

The new dynamics of increasing interdependence and globalization forces us to meet together the challenges imposed on us by the forces of fragmentation that continue to hamper the attainment of goals that have become common political objectives. It is within that framework that we place general and complete disarmament. For that, we need not only political determination but also an ability to adapt multilateral disarmament negotiating structures to present-day realities to enable broad participation in establishing joint measures that take into account the security needs of all, the rationalization of the work of our deliberative bodies and the revitalization of and support for the Regional Centres for Disarmament, including the Regional Centre in Africa, which is paralysed from lack of resources.

Benin, like other countries in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, again expresses its support for the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, scheduled for 1997. That special session will afford us an opportunity, on the threshold of the third millennium, to re-examine the more problematic aspects of the disarmament process and to mobilize the international community and public opinion in favour of disarmament to consolidate world peace and security.

The Chairman: Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to make a strong appeal to all delegations to be present in the Conference Room on time so that the Committee can make more efficient use of conference services. It is especially important that delegations making statements be in the Conference Room on time. We have 13 speakers on the list for this afternoon's meeting, and owing to the late start of the meeting this morning we have had to ask some delegations to speak in the afternoon. As you may know, the Committee will not have interpretations after 6 p.m. sharp.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/50/PV.11

General Assembly

Fiftieth session

Official Records

First Committee

11th Meeting

Thursday, 26 October 1995, 3 p.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdenechuluun . . . . . (Mongolia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 57 to 81 *(continued)*

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Rivero Rosario (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Although we know that we are pressed for time, I must nevertheless say how pleased we are to see you, Mr. Chairman, guiding our work. Your election, together with the well-deserved elections of the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur, will, we know, ensure the successful accomplishment of the Committee's work.

In recent days, in the course of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we have heard this quotation from the Preamble to the Charter repeated frequently:

> "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" —

one of the aspirations voiced at the time of the founding of the United Nations. Only a few weeks after the Charter was signed, and before it came into effect, bringing the United Nations into being, the unforgettable bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki took place and the nuclear era had begun. Fifty years have elapsed since the United Nations was established and countless resolutions have been adopted in the General Assembly with regard to nuclear weapons and to the need to ban and eliminate them, and as one of the first steps towards such a goal to ban nuclear tests of their qualitative or quantitative capacities.

Now that 50 years have elapsed and now that, with the disappearance of its East-West confrontation, the chapter of the cold war is closed and no longer a substantial part of international relations, the Cuban delegation must say it feels discouraged that, despite the clamour of the international community and despite the will of the majority of the Members of the United Nations, we have been unable to realize our aspirations. Nuclear weapons continue to exist and, even in the subsoil of our Earth, earthquakes are being caused by nuclear tests. While there have been reductions in the huge nuclear arsenals of the States that possess the largest stores of nuclear weapons, work is none the less under way to improve the weapons. It is surprising also that, while the cold war has come to an end, the military doctrines that support the possession of nuclear weapons have not yet become a part of the past and a subject merely for historians and museums. Rather, they continue to exist and indeed some are defending their relevance.

All Member States are faced with an undeniable challenge. This is particularly true of States that heretofore did not support a comprehensive ban on testing. Early in 1996 there will be a treaty banning all kinds of nuclear testing, including peaceful and simulated tests. My delegation supports the adoption of a clear and unequivocal message emanating from this session of the General Assembly in this regard. It should be embodied in a draft resolution that would endorse the sense of the international community and that could be adopted without a vote.

Our delegation once again reiterates its strong support for a ban on, and the elimination of, nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction. On 25 March 1995, in

95-86450 (E)

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keeping with this position, and as a demonstration of our country's will fully to join in the Latin American and Caribbean community, my country decided to sign the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean — the Treaty of Tlatelolco — and has taken the necessary steps for its ratification.

As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba indicated when signing the Treaty

> "In the shadow of the serious dangers and together with great sacrifices this event too is the reaffirmation by the Government of the Republic of Cuba of the truly pacific nature of its own nuclear programme. We reiterate with a sense of responsibility that obstacles that have prevented Cuba's full adherence to that Treaty continue to affect the security of our country seriously."

As was indicated in the statement that was affixed to the signature,

> "The only nuclear Power in this part of the world, the United States of America, has practised a hostile policy against Cuba, continues its economic and financial blockade of the country, and maintains, forcibly and against the will of our people, an illegal occupation of part of the national territory. Its vessels carrying nuclear weapons transit that area. The future solution of this problem should be considered as a prerequisite to having our country continue to subscribe to this Treaty."

On that same day the Chemical Weapons Convention was also signed and it too is being studied with a view to its ratification. My country attaches great importance thereto. Accordingly, last March, together with the Provisional Technical Secretariat, a regional seminar was organized on the national application of that Convention. We are actively working at The Hague with a view to settling the outstanding issues that are being negotiated.

There can be no doubt whatsoever that the tremendous efforts being made to conclude the negotiations on this Convention — and, more recently, the residual aspects of it — have not yet been matched by States which, because of their possession of chemical weapons, should be in the vanguard of the ratification process. Cuba calls on the international community to delay no longer in adhering to this Convention.

As concerns weapons of mass destruction, Cuba, as a party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, has been working actively with other delegations in the meetings recently held to assess and agree on possible new measures to verify the implementation of that Convention. The meetings that are to take place next year will continue to receive our full attention.

In our delegation's opinion, it is essential that we continue to stress the indissoluble link between peace and development. From our perspective, the idea that just and lasting peace is impossible without the conditions for economic and social development remains fully valid. Furthermore, there can be no social justice or economic and social progress without a prevailing atmosphere of peace and security. The Cuban President's statement at the Eleventh Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held recently in Colombia remains particularly relevant in this regard. He stated that:

> "The production of increasingly sophisticated and dangerous weapons continues. Trade in these weapons is growing. There is ferocious competition between the major manufacturers. The major weapons salesmen participate as permanent members in every meeting of the Security Council. These are the people who are trying to promote peace on behalf of the United Nations. Could it be that the end of the cold war has allowed the tremendous resources once devoted to the arms race to be allocated to more noble causes?"

There can be no doubt that the benefits to the economic and social development of our countries, particularly the developing countries, have yet to become a reality. In the new international world, it is astounding to learn that the United States Congress is approving military budgets larger than those proposed by its President. One wonders who wants more weapons when what is necessary is an even greater and more decisive contribution by all wealthy countries to the economic and social development of all peoples and the achievement of a just and lasting peace.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): On behalf of the 13 States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) that are Members of the United Nations, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your election. I wish to assure you of our full support as you discharge your responsibilities. We also wish to pay a well-deserved

tribute to Ambassador Luis Valencia Rodríguez of Ecuador, who presided over this Committee at its forty-ninth session.

We wish to thank the Secretary-General and the Disarmament Commission for the reports they have submitted on the items under consideration. We also wish to acknowledge the contributions of the Centre for Disarmament Affairs, the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, the Institute for Disarmament Research and the Conference on Disarmament.

In recent years, significant progress has been achieved in the field of disarmament. International treaties have been established for virtually all existing categories of weapons of mass destruction. Arms agreements, such as START I and START II, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the Open Skies Treaty and the Lisbon Protocol, would have been inconceivable in the tense decades of the cold war. We are making progress towards the achievement of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty and a convention banning the production of fissile material for nuclear-explosive purposes, and there are progressive attempts to reduce nuclear weapons globally with the ultimate goal of eliminating them.

CARICOM countries are proud to be parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which was signed in 1967. We welcome Cuba as a signatory to the Treaty. This, the signing of the Quadripartite Safeguards Agreement last year and the ratifications by Brazil, Argentina and Chile have consolidated the regime established by the Treaty. We encourage the establishment of proposed free zones across the world and welcome the Declaration on the Denuclearization of the South Pacific.

We have been pleased to note the joint announcement made on 20 October by the Governments of France, the United Kingdom and the United States of their intention to sign the relevant Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga in 1996, thereby joining Russia and China as signatories to the Protocols. We believe that these developments can only further strengthen international peace and security and that they are positive steps towards the early completion of negotiations for a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

At the same time, we urge nuclear-weapon States to respect the moratorium on nuclear testing. Like other non-nuclear-weapon States, CARICOM countries supported the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) on the basis of the declared intention of nuclear Powers to exercise restraint in relation to vertical proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

We reiterate our serious disappointment at the recent decisions by some nuclear-weapon States to resume nuclear testing. We view these decisions as a serious blow to the non-proliferation regime and we associate ourselves fully with the statement on this matter issued in September 1995 by the States Parties to the Treaties of Tlatelolco and Rarotonga.

In 1978, the participants in the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament concluded that disarmament had become an imperative and the most urgent task facing the international community, and consequently agreed in the Programme of Action that priorities and measures in the field of disarmament should be undertaken as a matter of urgency in the areas of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, and conventional weapons, including any which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects. There was also established a comprehensive phased programme with agreed time-frames for progressive and balanced reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, leading to their ultimate and complete elimination at the earliest possible time.

We also wish to recall that in 1990, in its Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade, the General Assembly noted that the specific goals of the Second Disarmament Decade were not fully realized. The General Assembly identified common goals in the nuclear, conventional and chemical fields and supported initiatives such as the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The Declaration affirmed the positive role that an informed public could play in the process of disarmament by promoting a constructive and realistic dialogue on issues relating to disarmament. The Declaration ended by noting that:

> "As the world moves towards the twenty-first century, it is evident that future generations will need increasing knowledge and understanding of the interdependent nature of life on the planet. Education on international peace and security issues will play a fundamental part in allowing every individual to realize his or her role as a responsible member of the world community." (*General Assembly resolution 45/62, annex, para. 7*)

Over the years, our goals have not changed, although they have at times seemed elusive. Most recently, at the Special Commemorative Meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we

representatives of Member States adopted a Declaration stating that,

> "While recognizing that action to secure global peace, security and stability will be futile unless the economic and social needs of people are addressed ... [we will] strongly support United Nations, regional and national efforts on arms control, limitation and disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, in all aspects, and other weapons of mass destruction ... in pursuit of our common commitment to a world free of all these weapons." (*resolution 50/6, para. 1*)

We note that, despite these lofty commitments, we have been unable, through the Disarmament Commission, to carry out the mandate of resolution 49/75 B, in which the Commission was requested to:

> "make a preliminary assessment of the implementation of the Declaration [of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade] as well as suggestions that may be put forward to ensure appropriate progress, and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session". (*resolution 49/75 B, para. 2*)

CARICOM countries believe that preparations for the next special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to be held in 1997, must be based on an appraisal of the international situation and the prospects for substantial progress in disarmament, taking into account the interrelated factors of security, development and peace. We believe that recognition must be given to the fact that our concept of security must now include sustained economic growth and sustainable development, the eradication of poverty, the protection of the environment and the investment of the world's resources in people rather than in weapons of war. CARICOM countries believe that, in the preparations for the new special session on disarmament, the link between disarmament and development must be firmly maintained.

We cannot but be aware that, despite a reported reduction since the end of the cold war, global spending on arms still totals over $700 billion per year. This amount easily rivals the debt burden of the developing countries and of the global expenditure needed to redress the social and economic ills affecting most of the world's population. The figures speak for themselves: some 1 billion people live below the subsistence level; half of the world's population may not have access to safe drinking water; three quarters of the developing world do not have adequate sanitary facilities; while at least 200 million people lack basic shelter. We need to renew our political commitment to address this matter at the national and international levels if we are to attain the sought-after promise of peace, stability and development.

Despite the progress in disarmament to which I alluded earlier, much remains to be done. There has, it is true, been progressive harmonization of the multilateral regimes designed to address the proliferation of materials, equipment and technology for nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and missile-delivery systems. But, as the Secretary-General points out in his report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the work of the Organization:

> "... it has become increasingly evident that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the availability of their basic components constitute a growing threat to international peace and security". (*A/50/1, para. 947*)

Moreover, with the dismantling of nuclear weapons, problems regarding means to dispose of the fissile material they contain — plutonium in particular — have been the subject of increasing concern. CARICOM countries support the view that the substantial plutonium stockpiles from commercial nuclear reactors and the proliferation dangers they represent require immediate action. Adequate long-term solutions to the disposition of plutonium must be implemented as soon as possible. This has a direct connection with the problem of the transport of hazardous waste and radioactive material.

In 1992, Heads of Government of CARICOM countries expressed their grave concern at the shipment of plutonium proposed at that time and the prospects for future shipments of hazardous and radioactive material through the Caribbean Sea. Consistent with this approach, Trinidad and Tobago, in its capacity as Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island States, issued a call at the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in April 1995 for an end to these shipments through the archipelagic and territorial seas and exclusive economic zones.

At their meeting earlier this month, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean Community again expressed grave concern at the recurring threat posed to the region through the marine transport of irradiated nuclear fuel, plutonium and high-level radioactive wastes. They noted that, despite the implacable opposition of the Community to this type of activity, there are plans to

continue these shipments well into the next decade. The Ministers reiterated the view that these shipments are of priority concern to CARICOM countries, since they constitute a lethal threat to the environmental integrity of their economies and to the health and livelihood of their peoples. They noted that CARICOM countries possess neither the resources nor the capability to deal with the potentially devastating effects of any possible accidents relating to these shipments, and they recalled that the 1994 Barbados Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States recognized the particular vulnerabilities of these States to environmental disasters and affirmed that the international community had the responsibility to facilitate the efforts of small island developing States in minimizing the stress to their fragile ecosystems. CARICOM countries intend to keep this matter before the attention of the international community.

CARICOM countries cannot ignore the need to control the production and transfers of conventional arms. We believe that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms can be a confidence-building measure to enhance global and regional security by creating transparency. We hope that, in future, quantitative targets can be set for the reduction of conventional weapons. We strongly support the Secretary-General's call for a coordinated response by the international community to the destabilizing effects of the unrestrained flow of conventional weapons and the proliferation of light arms, particularly automatic assault weapons and anti-personnel mines. The Secretary-General has pointed out that expenditure on light weapons represents nearly one third of the world's total arms trade.

Often linked to the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and other criminal activity, the illicit arms traffic has a destabilizing effect, particularly on small, vulnerable, open societies, and poses a very real threat to international peace and security. The problem is compounded when this traffic is directed to areas of intra-State conflicts which, as stated in document A/50/60, are often characterized by:

> "the collapse of state institutions, especially the police and judiciary, with resulting paralysis of governance, a breakdown of law and order, and general banditry and chaos". (*A/50/60, para. 13*)

We agree with the Secretary-General that:

> "Progress since 1992 in the area of weapons of mass destruction and major weapons systems must be followed by parallel progress in conventional arms, particularly with respect to light weapons". (*ibid, para. 65*)

To be effective, however, any action taken must include what the Secretary-General calls "micro-disarmament", as well as institutional reform, improved police and judicial systems, electoral reform and economic and social development.

A related matter of concern to CARICOM countries is the decision to shelve the project proposed by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research to study the military aspects of the security of small States within the context of the post-cold-war period. The project had been expected to produce comparative studies of small States in the Gulf, Asia-Pacific, Indian Ocean and Caribbean regions. We hope that the project can be revived and implemented as a matter of urgency.

We also wish to express our concern at the report of the imminent closure of the Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Lomé, Lima and Kathmandu. We believe that, with the focus now fixed firmly on conventional weapons, as emphasized by the Secretary-General, these Centres could play a useful role in the development of regional initiatives and in education involving both governmental and non-governmental institutions. We hope that a way can be found for the activities of these Centres to be continued, and indeed enhanced, to reach a wider cross-section of the countries of the various regions, including the small States of the Caribbean.

In his "Supplement to An Agenda for Peace", the Secretary-General has reminded us that:

> "... we are still in a time of transition. The end of the cold war was a major movement of tectonic plates and the after-shocks continue to be felt. But even if the ground beneath our feet has not yet settled, we still live in a new age that holds great promise for both peace and development." (*A/50/60, para. 5*)

If we are to fulfil this promise, it is up to us and the States we represent to meet the challenge of this new age.

Mr. Sukayri (Jordan): As a member of the Bureau, I am proud to have the opportunity to work with you very closely, Sir, and my delegation pledges its full cooperation and support to you and to my dear colleagues, the other members of the Bureau. Your predecessor, Ambassador Luis Valencia Rodriguez of Ecuador, and his colleagues

deserve our sincere appreciation for their achievements and dedication during the forty-ninth session.

Over the past few decades, the question of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction has enjoyed top priority on the international agenda. In the past few years, however, this issue has become even more important. After the end of the cold war, which brought about an end to the super-Power arms race, the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction has become a major threat to international peace and security. Hence, the importance of the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which was held in the spring of this year.

Despite its significance, the indefinite extension of the NPT was not the only important achievement of the Conference. The decisions on the strengthening of the review process for the Treaty and on the Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, as well as the resolution on the Middle East, are all of the utmost importance.

As we know, two of the aforementioned decisions, as well as the resolution on the Middle East, provide for the universality of the Treaty. In view of the fact that only nine countries are still outside the Treaty, and taking into consideration the fact that some of these nine States are already involved in other areas of the international non-proliferation regime — namely, the nuclear-weapon-free zones, which make their accession to the Treaty less urgent — my delegation believes that new methods of securing the universality of the Treaty have to be introduced. One of these could be the establishment of an ad hoc committee with the mandate to approach each and every one of these States, individually or collectively, in order to secure their accession to the Treaty.

Other possibilities should be explored, and in addition to the General Assembly's efforts one can envisage the Security Council playing a decisive role in this regard. Without prejudice to the sovereignty of any Member State, and as a last resort, the Council could act under Chapter VII of the Charter and adopt a resolution calling for the immediate accession to the Treaty by all Member States that have not yet acceded to it and that are not parties to any international nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Collective security, as a principle means of guaranteeing, *inter alia*, the vital interests of all of international society in peace and security, must prevail over the interests of individual States.

The ultimate objective of the international non-proliferation regime, of which the NPT is the cornerstone, is general and complete nuclear disarmament. As we do every year, we commend the progress made by the United States and the Russian Federation in the area of nuclear arms reduction. However, more effective steps are required, on the one hand, to rid the world of its existing nuclear-weapon stockpiles and, on the other, to stop and roll back nuclear proliferation where it has occurred. The same applies to other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery.

We commend and highly appreciate the efforts being made within the Conference on Disarmament with a view to the conclusion by 1996 of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We commend, in particular, the recently-announced waiver of the 10-year withdrawal term and urge all parties in the Conference on Disarmament to conclude their negotiations as soon as possible and come out with a zero-yield comprehensive treaty.

The next step should be to negotiate a multilateral, effectively verifiable cut-off treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear explosive devices. Such a treaty would complement the CTBT.

As far as the Middle East is concerned, the universality of the NPT is of the utmost importance. Pending the accession to the Treaty by all States in the region that have not yet done so, it is imperative to reactivate our efforts in all forums towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East.

Jordan has been participating in good faith in the multilateral negotiations on arms control and disarmament. In view of the recent positive developments within the ongoing peace process in the region, we are hopeful that the multilateral negotiations will soon lead to effective and verifiable arms control agreements between the States of the region.

The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East will be a major achievement. We fully support this goal and believe that, in addition to its contribution to general and complete nuclear disarmament, such a zone will enhance confidence and eliminate a major threat to regional security.

We should recall at this point that, in its resolution on the Middle East, the 1995 Review and Extension

Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) expressed its concern over the continued existence in the Middle East of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities and reaffirmed the importance of the early realization of universal adherence to the Treaty.

The Conference also devoted two paragraphs of its Middle East resolution to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone and a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the region. Operative paragraph 5 of the resolution

> "Calls upon all States in the Middle East to take practical steps in appropriate forums aimed at making progress toward, *inter alia*, the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems, and to refrain from taking any measures that preclude the achievement of this objective." (*NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), p. 14, para. 5*)

Operative paragraph 6 states

> "Calls upon all States party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to extend their cooperation and to exert their utmost efforts with a view to ensuring the early establishment by regional parties of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems." (*ibid., para. 6*)

These two paragraphs speak for themselves and need no further assertion. Therefore, we call upon Israel, the only State in the region with significant nuclear capabilities, to respond positively to this resolution, as well as to all relevant United Nations resolutions, by adhering to the NPT and placing its nuclear facilities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and also to take all necessary steps for facilitating the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East.

My delegation welcomes the fruitful outcome of the work of the Group of Experts which has prepared the final text of a treaty on an African nuclear-weapon-free zone. On this occasion, I should like to congratulate all African delegations and wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to the Chairman and Members of the Group, particularly to Mr. Sola Ogunbanwo, the Coordinator and Chief Expert Adviser on the African nuclear-weapon-free zone for his relentless efforts in this regard. I hope that this great achievement will motivate all States in the region of the Middle East to follow suit.

In spite of their significance as a major source of threat to international peace and security, weapons of mass destruction are not the only such source. There are conventional weapons that are excessively injurious and have indiscriminate effects. Realizing this fact, and convinced of the importance of banning such weapons, which cause much human suffering, Jordan has recently adhered to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects. Along the same lines, Jordan commends and actively supports all efforts leading to a complete ban on the export of anti-personnel land-mines.

We are satisfied with the steps taken so far pertaining to the rationalization of the work of the First Committee. However, in order to rationalize the rationalization process, we here suggest the biennialization of this item on the agenda of this Committee, i.e., we urge the Committee to take a decision during this session to the effect that, as of this session or the next, the question of rationalizing the work of the Committee will be taken up once every two years.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I am confident that your skill and great diplomatic experience will carry our work to a successful conclusion, and I assure you of my delegation's support for and cooperation in the work that lies ahead. I wish also to express the gratitude of my delegation to your predecessor, Ambassador Valencia Rodriguez, for his able guidance of this Committee during the forty-ninth session.

The occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations provides an opportunity for reflection. We should take stock of our achievements in the field of disarmament and, at the same time, we should strive to define the course of future endeavours in this field.

On 11 May of this year, the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) adopted three decisions: on strengthening the review process of the Treaty; on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament; and on the extension of the NPT, as well as a resolution on the Middle East.

The four decisions, considered as a package, reflected and continue to reflect the interests and objectives of the parties to the NPT, and should guide the international community in its pursuit of nuclear non-proliferation, and towards an enhanced Treaty review process.

It was generally expected that these lofty objectives would ensure the adoption of a final declaration by the NPT Review and Extension Conference since the purpose of the Conference — as we should remind ourselves — was to review and extend, and not just to extend, the Treaty. The mistaken notion will no doubt be short-lived, and my delegation hopes that future review conferences will actually include review. The parties to the NPT must honour their undertakings and must comprehensively and candidly face up to the weaknesses and deficiencies in the implementation of the Treaty.

After all, the success of the Treaty so far has been due primarily to the nuclear-weapon States' fulfilment of their obligations under it. It is a recognized fact that the nuclear-weapon States are not discharging satisfactorily the nuclear-disarmament process called for in the provisions of article VI of the Treaty. This disparity in the fulfilment of obligations cannot be perpetuated.

In this context, it should be pointed out that, in accordance with the Principles and Objectives adopted last April and the programme of action contained therein, the nuclear-weapon States undertook to fulfil with determination the undertakings with regard to nuclear disarmament, as set out in article VI of the Treaty, and they reaffirmed their commitment to pursue in good faith negotiations on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament. It is of paramount importance that these commitments be honoured, the programme of action accomplished and, consequently, the existing nuclear arsenals eliminated within a specified time-frame.

Universality is a *sine qua non* for the attainment of the ultimate objectives of the NPT. In the absence of universality, the dangers posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons will persist and, with time, will increase throughout the world. The current situation in the Middle East region bears witness to such threats. One country is engaging in advanced, ambiguous nuclear activities, which are not subject to international supervision. This imbalance is unacceptable. If allowed to continue, it will only lead to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region and could well carry the seeds of a regional arms race, with all its grave consequences.

In this context, I wish to recall that last week the representative of Israel stated before the First Committee that Israel supports the principle of non-proliferation, recalling his country's vote in favour of the NPT in 1968 and its support for the indefinite extension of the Treaty. My delegation welcomes Israel's support for the principle of non-proliferation. But after a quarter of a century it is time for deeds to replace words and for Israel to accede to the NPT. My delegation reiterates the call on Israel to accede to the Treaty and to place its nuclear facilities under full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Egypt views with great satisfaction the adoption of the final text of the Treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa — accomplished during the thirty-first regular session, at summit level, of the Organization of African Unity, held in June this year at Addis Ababa — and looks forward to joining other members of the African Group in submitting to the First Committee a draft resolution on the Treaty. This represents a most important achievement in the field of non-proliferation, in the framework of article VII of the NPT. It expands the total area covered by nuclear-weapon-free zones and brings us one step closer to the goal of general and complete disarmament.

I wish to express my delegation's appreciation of the efforts of Dr. Sola Ogunbanwo, Chief Expert Adviser on the African nuclear-weapon-free zone, who very ably assisted the group of experts. Egypt looks forward to hosting the Treaty-signing ceremony next year. In this context, Egypt sincerely hopes that the nuclear-weapon States will without delay ratify Protocol I to the Treaty.

Regrettably, the Middle East lags far behind Africa in this respect, despite the unanimous calls by the General Assembly over the past 15 years for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East; despite the Security Council's recognition, in its resolution 687 (1991), that the goal shall be to establish in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and of all missiles for their delivery; and despite the call, in paragraph 5 of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, for

> "all States in the Middle East to take practical steps in appropriate forums aimed at making progress towards, *inter alia*, the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems, and to refrain from taking any measures that preclude the achievement of this

objective". *(NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I, resolution on the Middle East, para. 5)*

This clarion call from the international community is in response to the existence of an advanced unsafeguarded nuclear programme in Israel and in recognition of the fact that the Middle East is a region that, in the light of its history, cannot afford any ambiguity in this regard.

For many years Egypt has conducted extensive consultations with all regional parties, as well as with all extraregional parties involved in the Middle East peace process, and it has submitted several proposals in all relevant forums at the regional and international levels with a view to advancing specific arrangements that would contribute to the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The latest of these initiatives was in the framework of the multilateral Middle East peace process, where Egypt presented several proposals in the context of the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security, concerning provisions and elements related the establishment of such a zone, as is mentioned in paragraph 5 of the report of the Secretary-General on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East (A/50/325). There has not been any substantive, constructive response from Israel to these proposals.

I find it necessary to recall here that for many years Israel had stated that such a zone could be established only through direct negotiations between the parties concerned. Direct negotiations began more than three years ago in the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security, yet all efforts to start meaningful negotiations with a view to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region were unsuccessful. In fact, Israel blocked any serious consideration of the issue, holding it hostage to certain preconditions revolving around "peace and reconciliation" with all States in the region.

If such a position might initially seem to possess some semblance of justification, closer scrutiny and the experience of the last three years reflect vividly the absence of any genuine intent to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

It is our firm belief that a comprehensive examination of the modalities and all the related aspects for establishing the zone should begin now in the regional negotiations in the context of the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security. No matter how prolonged this process may prove to be, the point to be emphasized is the timing. The initiation phase is now — and not, as the representative of Israel stated in the Committee last week:

> "the day when conditions in the region will be auspicious for the launching of discussions on a nuclear-weapon-free zone". *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, First Committee, 8th meeting, p. 4)*

Peace and security are two sides of the same coin. Security, on the other hand, cannot be realized unless it is reciprocal and extends to all. Security cannot be the private domain of one party at the expense of all the other regional parties. In our contemporary world, security is synonymous with the ability to ensure protection against nuclear threats.

Egypt will continue to advocate and strive for the creation of a nuclear- weapon-free zone in the Middle East, within the broader initiative for the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, and will again this year submit a draft resolution on the establishment of such a zone.

I now turn to the comprehensive test-ban treaty. Despite initial slow progress on a comprehensive treaty during the first half of this year, the last session of the Conference on Disarmament has registered satisfactory results, particularly on the scope of the treaty and the acceptance by three nuclear-weapon States of a comprehensive zero-yield ban on tests.

On the question of the scope of the treaty, Egypt firmly supports a complete and total ban on all nuclear explosions without any exception, regardless of their purpose or their yield. Indeed a test-ban treaty with a scope which falls short of banning all nuclear-test explosions or any other nuclear explosions would not be comprehensive and would therefore be ineffective.

With respect to verification and compliance, it is our view that the verification mechanism of the treaty must be structured in such a way as to provide adequate and effective detection without being excessively complicated or costly. The possibility of providing, within this mechanism, for sanctions against non-compliance should be seriously considered. We believe that agreement on the structure of such a mechanism and of its component parts can be reached rapidly and we urge all delegations to ensure that this is achieved.

As far as the proposed treaty Organization is concerned, we believe that this function should be carried out by the International Atomic Energy Agency. This would allow us to benefit from the experience accumulated thus far by the Agency in implementing the relevant provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and would be most effective in terms of cost.

Our message to the Conference on Disarmament is very clear: a universal and effectively verifiable test-ban treaty must be concluded during the first half of 1996 and be ready for signature by the beginning of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly.

The next priority on the disarmament agenda must be a comprehensive agreement banning the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes. We must clearly state that on our part we do not see much merit in a fissile material ban which would only encompass future production and thereby maintain a most unsatisfactory status quo. If our work on a ban on fissile material is to have any relevance it must serve to prevent both vertical and horizontal proliferation and produce tangible results. This dual objective cannot be achieved unless existing stockpiles of weapons-usable fissile material form an integral part of the negotiations, as reflected in the report of the Special Coordinator on this issue in the Conference on Disarmament and as indicated in the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee established within its framework.

As for security assurances, it will be recalled that on 11 April 1995, in an effort to respond to the clearly justifiable and logical demand by States which of their own volition, had renounced the nuclear option and had agreed to live up to their responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with Article 26 of the Charter, the Security Council adopted resolution 984 (1995) to provide security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States.

However, when it came to formulating and drafting that particular resolution, the five permanent members of the Security Council completely by-passed any dialogue with the non-nuclear-weapon States — or I should say, did not open this dialogue in a timely manner. Some States, including Egypt, did engage in some negotiations with the five permanent members at a later stage.

We believe that non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT have the legitimate right to effective, comprehensive and unconditional security assurances in a legally-binding form which would provide, in an effective manner, for the following essential principles: a clear determination that the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons constitutes a threat to international peace and security; a trigger mechanism that would ensure a response by the Security Council to any attack or threat of attack by nuclear weapons; and a commitment by the Security Council to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace.

Such assurances should complement those provided in Security Council resolution 984 (1995) and would be in conformity with the letter and spirit of the decision on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Disarmament adopted on 11 May 1995 at the Review and Extension Conference of the NPT, which called, *inter alia*, for the consideration of further steps to assure non-nuclear weapon States party to the Treaty against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons. These steps could take the form of an internationally legally binding instrument.

In addition to the above-mentioned principles, we continue to advocate complementary steps which would serve to enhance the security of non-nuclear-weapon States pending the attainment of an internationally legally binding instrument. These are: the provision of more elaborate security assurances for those non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT that are also parties to nuclear-weapon-free zones in their respective regions; a renunciation by the five permanent members of the Security Council of the unanimity rule contained in Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter pertaining to the concurring votes of the five permanent members with regard to the application of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States; and a commitment by all States parties to the NPT not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against any State party to the NPT that does not possess or place nuclear weapons on its territory.

My delegation believes that, unless all these steps are taken, Security Council resolution 984 (1995) falls short of general expectations and is wanting in credibility, deterrence and protective value.

Now some brief comments on the question of transparency in armaments. Many of us who participated in the work of the First Committee in 1991 will recall the intensive negotiations that took place on the text of what was then draft resolution A/46/L.18, later to became General Assembly resolution 46/36 L entitled

"Transparency in armaments". It is no secret that already at the time when the matter was discussed there was significant divergence of views on the substance of that resolution. However, the modest initial steps to establish the register in 1991 were then recognized and accepted as a practical necessity since the evolutionary nature of this mechanism was abundantly clear from General Assembly resolution 46/36 L. It was also clear at that time that there was a prescribed time-frame for ensuring the applicability of this evolution to be completed during the 1994 session of the Group of Governmental Experts which was mandated to undertake this task.

The failure of the Group of Governmental Experts to reach agreement on the issues of the development of the scope of the Register or of the expansion of the scope of the Register to include information on existing stockpiles and indigenous production capabilities or on the incorporation in the Register of weapons of mass destruction was a clear indication to many delegations, including my own, of the lack of political will to embrace meaningfully the principle of transparency. We can only attribute the reluctance of over half the membership of the United Nations to participate in this mechanism to their legitimate concern not to associate themselves with a process that is currently blatantly discriminatory.

Prospects for the eventual development of the Register in terms of the expansion of its scope seem remote in view of the apparent lack of political will on the part of the international community, or of some in the international community, to faithfully embrace the principles and objectives of transparency or apply them in a comprehensive and non-discriminatory manner. However, Egypt will continue to support the application of the principles of transparency to all fields of disarmament in a comprehensive and non-discriminatory manner that would serve to guarantee the security interests of all Member States equally and ultimately lead us to a mechanism that would ensure transparency in armaments rather than a register of selective and limited conventional arms transfers which, from the beginning, we would oppose.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that security is reciprocal and extends to all. We must therefore, in our collective commitment to achieve security at the international as well as at the regional level, ensure that our efforts are comprehensive in addressing every member of the international community and that the obligations prescribed will be balanced and equitable for all.

Mr. Kharrazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset I should like to extend my congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to the chairmanship of this important session of the First Committee. I am confident that with your vast diplomatic skills and knowledge of international affairs, particularly in the areas of disarmament and international security, you will effectively guide the deliberations of the First Committee to a successful conclusion. I should also like to express my delegation's sincere gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Rodríguez of Ecuador, who conducted the proceedings of the Committee at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly in such an exemplary manner. Let me also take this opportunity to extend my felicitations to the other members of the Bureau.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations has provided us with an exceptional opportunity to assess our efforts in the past five decades to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. It also gives us an opportunity, based on the assessment that we make, to chart a future course of action which best serves the United Nations in pursuance of its lofty goals.

It is unfortunate to note that our performance in the past does not leave us much room for complacency. Right from the day that the United Nations was established, and contrary to the letter and spirit of the Charter, a group of States did not leave one stone unturned in pursuit of the most destructive weapons that mankind had ever known. Even the institutions that we have created since then have failed to curb these weapons and to reverse the arms race which, despite the end of the cold war, continues unabated, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. In this context, it is also important to note that in recent years certain Powers and their allies have launched a systematic campaign in various United Nations forums to replace the priorities of disarmament and security as envisaged in the Final Document of the First Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, of 1978.

For the sake of brevity, I would like to review briefly the performance of some of the disarmament and security bodies and conferences in 1995. The Conference on Disarmament did not make any progress on any part of its agenda and was unable to establish its traditional ad hoc committees with the exception of a committee on the comprehensive test-ban treaty. The United Nations Disarmament Commission, after four years of intense negotiations and deliberations, could not conclude its work on nuclear disarmament and the review of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. As in the past few years, the

Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean did not have a successful session because those who did not share peaceful initiatives and approaches aimed at restoring peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region and its main branches had decided not to participate in its work. The Preparatory Commission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons at The Hague did not make progress on items on its agenda, especially on those items dealing with the concerns and the inalienable rights of developing countries, in particular article 11 of the Convention. The 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) decided, by a majority vote, to extend the Treaty indefinitely. By using any means possible, a majority was eventually established for the indefinite extension of the Treaty by nuclear States parties and their principal allies. None the less, it left many principal quarters unconvinced. Even where support was expressed, it was in many cases subject to reservations and conditions. The Conference also failed to adopt a final document on the operation of the Treaty in the past 25 years, which indicates that the purposes of the preamble and the provisions of the Treaty have not yet been realized.

Despite the foregoing assessment, we consider the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the NPT as a turning-point in our efforts towards a world free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. The nuclear-weapon States have made certain commitments — reflected in the documents of the Conference, which were adopted in a package. We take it that these commitments have been made in good faith. They will be made subject to rigorous assessment and evaluation in our review process, which will be retriggered at the 1997 Preparatory Committee, as decided.

In this regard, Mr. Ali Akbar Velayati, the Foreign Minister of Iran, in his statement before the General Assembly on 25 September 1995, said, *inter alia*:

> "The indefinite extension of the Treaty must be viewed within the framework of three major final documents of the Conference, together with the necessity for all signatories, particularly the nuclear Powers, to commit themselves to the full implementation of all provisions and objectives of the Treaty. These obligations include achieving complete nuclear disarmament, expanding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, strengthening the role and enhancing the authority of the IAEA as the only international body competent to oversee the good-faith discharge of Member States' responsibilities under the Treaty, ensuring the universality of the NPT as an urgent priority, and establishing the Middle East as a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In this connection, the nuclear-weapon States should, as a first step, prove their good faith by refraining from nuclear testing and finalizing a comprehensive test-ban treaty in 1996." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 5th meeting, pp. 30-31)*

The conclusion of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, despite some of its shortcomings, was a truly historic achievement because it is the first multilateral treaty that provides for the elimination of an entire class of weapons of mass destruction. Iran, as the latest victim of such inhumane weapons, actively and wholeheartedly contributed in the negotiations on the Convention, was a sponsor of the relevant resolution at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly and was among the first signatories of this important Convention.

The Islamic Republic of Iran firmly believes that the effectiveness and universality of the Convention will depend, to a large extent, on the way it is implemented and, in particular, on the degree to which developed, as well as developing, countries will comply with their obligations. Thus, the implementation of the Convention will require the same degree of perseverance and resourcefulness as did its negotiation. The preparatory work at The Hague, which has otherwise moved forward smoothly, has been marred by difficulties in arriving at solutions to some significant and contentious issues. In fact, most of the questions that were resolved politically during the negotiations at Geneva have met with contradictory interpretations and positions at The Hague. As anticipation mounts for the entry into force of the Convention, efforts need to be intensified to resolve the pending issues, including particularly those related to the definition of chemical weapons, inspection procedures, challenge inspections, and old, abandoned, dumped and buried chemical weapons, as well as the fundamental issue of the peaceful use of chemical material and technology to ensure the finalization of the preparatory work as soon as possible.

Regional and international approaches to disarmament and arms control are mutually reinforcing. In this context, the establishment of zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones strengthen the non-proliferation regime and, thereby, international peace and security. We welcome the progress that has been made towards the creation of the

African nuclear-weapon-free zone and consideration of new, alternative approaches by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean to achieve a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean region.

In the light of the United Nations constant support for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East, constructive and practical measures must be taken towards its realization. Israel's reported possession of nuclear weapons and its refusal to accept the NPT obligations and IAEA safeguards have a grave destabilizing effect in the Middle East. This is a serious issue that requires the attention of the international community. The resolution of this problem is a requisite for diminishing the perceptions of a nuclear threat in the region as well for smoothing the way towards securing a truly universal treaty. The institutionalization of regional confidence-building measures, including placing all facilities and installations under the IAEA safeguards mechanism, the accession by all regional States to all international disarmament instruments, particularly the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Convention on Chemical Weapons, are some of the urgent prerequisites for the establishment of a zone free from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Iran, for its part, has pursued the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and, as an original signatory of the NPT, the Convention on Bacteriological Weapons, the Convention on Chemical Weapons and other arms-control agreements, it has complied with all its obligations under those instruments.

The reckless build-up of conventional weapons has not only devoured much- needed resources but has also reinforced the atmosphere of mistrust and anxiety. Different areas have, as a result, become fair ground for political, economic and commercial exploitation by countries and companies that manufacture weapons. In the post-cold-war era, in particular, the reductions in national defence spending by most major arms-exporting nations have forced the arms industries to seek foreign weapons contracts to replace declining domestic orders. For such sales to materialize and to ensure the sustainability of arms industries, the creation of tension and confrontation in certain regions, such as the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, has been necessary.

In this regard, the Islamic Republic of Iran, while attaching great importance to transparency in armaments as a confidence-building measure, believes that transparency in armaments cannot by itself control the destabilizing accumulation of conventional arms in various regions. Therefore, what is really necessary — globally and particularly in the Middle East — is serious and genuine international cooperation for the comprehensive, non-selective, non-discriminatory, balanced and effective reduction of conventional arms. This may be realized, *inter alia*, through the reduction of military budgets and weapons procurement, the elimination of the presence of foreign forces in the region and the exercise of self-restraint by the major arms-exporting countries, which pour advanced weaponry into the Middle East and the Persian Gulf region. The Islamic Republic of Iran has been cited by impartial international sources as the country with the lowest defence budget in the region and the least weapons purchases. Indeed, Iran is committed to restoring a genuine and just peace, security and stability in the region.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, my delegation should like to assure you of our full cooperation in your discharge of your important responsibilities at this important session of the First Committee.

Mr. Vilchez Asher (Nicaragua) (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and Nicaragua, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to preside over the First Committee. We are sure that under your skilful guidance we will successfully conclude our work. We would also like to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Luis Valencia Rodríguez of Ecuador, and to express our congratulations to the other officers of the Committee and members of the Secretariat.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations prompts us to reflect on the Organization's challenges, on its future and on its struggle for peace, disarmament, development, human rights and international security.

In the sphere of disarmament and international security, many challenges still confront the United Nations and must be addressed before the end of this century.

The ideological division of the world, a source of deep distrust and tension, has ended, but despite that, there remain serious risks to peace and security owing to the growing number of regional conflicts and threats caused by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Thus, since the end of the East-West confrontation, arms limitation and disarmament, and in particular nuclear disarmament, continues to have a particular political importance for our countries.

In this spirit we regret to say that neither the agreement reached in May 1995 on the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) nor the moratorium on nuclear tests declared by the principal nuclear-weapon Powers have had an influence on the decision of some countries to engage in nuclear tests. Nuclear explosions, whatever their purpose, have been answered by justified protests from the international community, compromising the successful conclusion of the work on a comprehensive test-ban treaty and delaying achievement of the final goal sought by the majority of the world's countries, namely, the total elimination of the nuclear threat.

In the international sphere, the realization of a comprehensive test-ban treaty by 1996, the initiation and speedy conclusion of a treaty on cessation of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, compliance with the decision on Principles and Objectives adopted by the Review and Extension Conference of States Parties to the NPT, in which nuclear-weapon States reaffirmed their commitment to pursue negotiations and to endeavour to reduce nuclear weapons with the ultimate goals of eliminating them, and strengthening the NPT review process — all these illustrate the steps which, if achieved, would mark a milestone in the development of future progress in disarmament which must lead us to the final goal, namely, the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.

In this connection, we note with great satisfaction the developments leading to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa.

We believe that United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Asia and Latin America continue to be of fundamental importance in educating people on the subject of disarmament. There is broad agreement that the political and military changes that have occurred in recent years have shown the importance of regional activities in strengthening the stability and security of Member States. We would therefore regret the closing of those Centres for lack of resources and we urge that some suitable solution be found to that problem.

In Central America, de-mining is a task of extreme urgency and importance, with implications for civilian safety, socio-economic development and the strengthening of democracy. We cannot continue to tolerate the presence of hundreds of thousands of land-mines, which have a particularly serious impact on the civilian population, causing death, maiming and the devastation of large areas of arable land. Although the quantity of mines has decreased, their removal is proceeding at an unacceptably slow pace. Such is the situation in my own country, Nicaragua, where approximately 95,000 anti-personnel land-mines exist throughout the national territory and where it is difficult to implement the programmes envisaged for their removal because of lack of funds, although the Government is making superhuman efforts to carry out de-mining using its own resources, which entails the diversion of funds needed for development, a difficult situation for countries such as ours to bear.

It is important to emphasize the fact that the definitive solution to the problem created by mines and other devices in various parts of the world lies in a total ban on the production, stockpiling, exportation and proliferation of such inhumane weapons.

Moreover, we regret that at the first part of the Review Conference of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, held at Vienna from 25 September to 13 October, it was not possible to reinforce the provisions of Protocol II, on the use of land-mines.

After a decade of fratricidal war, the Central American region, united by historical, geopolitical, economic and cultural bonds, is now moving towards the consolidation of peace, democracy, disarmament, freedom and development. The achievement of peace through the procedure of establishing a firm and lasting peace in the region has led to a new political, legal and institutional reality in the Central American isthmus, culminating in the elaboration of a treaty on regional security.

This plan was prompted by the new world and regional realities and the new regional outlook, in which security is not grounded solely on military considerations but includes everything related to security, nor only of States but also of individuals. In other words, in keeping with the plan, we must move from military security to human security, from security for defence to cooperative security, from security from threats to preventive security.

The treaty on democratic security is scheduled for signing by the Heads of State of Central American countries at their forthcoming presidential summit meeting to be held in the sister Republic of Honduras in December of this year. It will mark the creation of a new model of regional security. As article 1 of the treaty indicates:

"The Central American model of democratic security is based on democracy and the strengthening of its institutions and on the rule of law, on the existence of Governments elected by universal, free and secret ballot and with unlimited respect for human rights in every State of the Central American region."

The institutional apparatus of this security system is set up in keeping with the provisions of the Tegucigalpa Protocol, the systematic interactions established in it and the practical functioning of the Regional Security Commission. In this connection the meeting at the presidential level is viewed as the highest legal body, the meeting of ministers of foreign affairs as the main body, and the Security Commission as a specialized subsidiary. The Treaty does not create any new institutions and nor does it weaken already existing security provisions; it establishes a gamut of reciprocal rights and duties in harmony with hemisphere and world security systems.

In conclusion, let me say that we in Central America are continuing to support our regional process of modernization, which is attempting to protect the Central American States and their populations from threats to their integrity, their development and their security.

Our commitment to disarmament will continue to grow stronger day by day. It was in this spirit that the Central Americans signed the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1993, and we are now in the process of ratifying it.

We hope that all the nations of the world will contribute to putting an end to the arms race and that the vast resources devoted to armaments will be utilized for economic and social development and, in the end, for improving the quality of life of all our peoples.

The Chairman: I now call on the representative of Morocco, who will speak in his capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. Benjelloun-Touimi (Morocco), President of the Conference on Disarmament: Allow me, at the outset, to extend to you, Sir, my warm congratulations on your election to the high office of Chairman of this Committee and to wish you every success in the discharge of your responsibilities. My congratulations go also to the other officers of the Committee, who assist you in your tasks.

I am speaking in my capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament to present to the First Committee the report of the Conference on its work during the 1995 session. This report is contained in document A/50/27, which is before the Committee.

In its report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session, the Conference on Disarmament recognized that in 1995 it would have a number of important areas for urgent negotiation and that these would be likely to draw heavily on its time and resources. The Conference decided that the balance of work in 1995 would be considered more fully before it determined which ad hoc committees, besides the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, would be established in 1995. Therefore, in response to the call of the international community, as contained in General Assembly resolution 49/70, which was adopted last year without a vote, the Conference re-established without delay the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban and continued intensive negotiations, as a high-priority task, with a view to concluding a universal and multilaterally and effectively verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty that would contribute to nuclear disarmament and would help to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects and to strengthen international security.

During its 1995 session, the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, under the dynamic and effective chairmanship of Ambassador Ludwik Dembinski of Poland, intensified the pace of the negotiations on a draft treaty. The results of these negotiations are reflected in the report of the Conference. It is heartening to note that the work of the Ad Hoc Committee continued in a businesslike manner, despite the turbulence engendered by the recent nuclear-test explosions. Although, admittedly, there is still a long way to go to complete a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, the progress achieved so far in the negotiations augurs well for its completion in 1996.

The most significant advance in the drafting of the Treaty relates to the scope of the ban. Although there is not yet final agreement on the treaty text dealing with scope, a clear convergence of the positions of nuclear-weapon States on this issue is emerging. This was made possible by the initiative of the United States, the United Kingdom and France in committing themselves to a true "zero-yield" treaty that would ban all testing, no matter how small the nuclear device. Given the utmost importance of reaching early agreement on the fundamental issue of scope, it is hoped that the emerging consensus will be consolidated so that the objective of concluding the treaty in 1996 can be achieved.

Another area in which very good progress was made is that of the structure of the international monitoring

system that is to be set up to verify compliance with the obligations under the treaty. While the parameters of the verification regime and the broad responsibilities of the organization that will implement the treaty have been worked out, these cannot be finalized until the scope and basic obligations have been fully agreed upon. Moreover, streamlining of the wording of the draft treaty has resulted in a much more logical text, despite the large amount of material still subject to agreement.

However, further determined efforts are required if agreement is to be reached on other important issues, such as the conditions for the entry into force of the treaty — how many States must ratify it, and which States are essential to its operation; on-site inspections and the circumstances under which international inspectors would be allowed access to a site in order to investigate suspicious events; and the composition of the Executive Council.

I am confident that, given the renewed commitment by all to conclude the treaty as early as possible next year, the Conference on Disarmament will be in a position to present to the General Assembly at this time next year an agreed comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, which the Secretary-General can open for signature as soon as possible thereafter.

The Conference was also able to take a step forward on the issue of the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Thanks to the determined efforts of the Special Coordinator, Ambassador Shannon of Canada, the Conference was able to agree on the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee to start the negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty. The importance of such a measure, in our collective efforts to strengthen the means of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to promote the process of nuclear disarmament, can hardly be overemphasized, and I am confident that the Conference will soon embark on these negotiations.

In addition, the Conference was able to move the long-outstanding issue of expansion of its membership out of the deadlock that had characterized it for a number of years. Building on General Assembly resolution 49/77 B, which was adopted by consensus at the last session, the Conference was able to register a meaningful measure of progress in this regard. After several rounds of intensive consultations, at both the bilateral and the multilateral levels, during the last stages of the session, the Conference decided, without prejudice to the consideration of other candidatures to date, that Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Finland, Iraq, Israel, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Ukraine, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe would all, together, assume membership of the Conference at the earliest possible date, to be decided by the Conference.

The same decision also provides for review of the situation following the presentation of progress reports by the President of the Conference on ongoing consultations. In this respect, I can assure the Committee that the consultation process on which I have already embarked will be pursued and intensified, with a view to implementing the decision. I know that, in my endeavours, I can count on the cooperation of all members of the Conference, and I hope to be able to present a report on the outcome of my consultations at the very beginning of the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

However, a cursory reading of the report of the Conference clearly indicates that the problems we had encountered at the beginning of the session regarding the agenda and organization of work were not solved, despite the strenuous efforts of successive Presidents. The Conference was not able to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committees on negative security assurances, transparency in armaments and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Nor was it able to deal in an organized fashion with the issue of nuclear disarmament or with the question of reviewing its current agenda to make it conform with present-day political realities.

I do not think that it is necessary for me to dwell too much on the reasons for our inability to address all items that we deliberately placed on our agenda, as the records of the Conference speak for themselves. While recognizing that this year's session of the Conference was held against the background of the uncertainties surrounding the preparations for, and the outcome of, the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which undoubtedly affected our proceedings, we hoped that the indefinite extension of the NPT would instil wisdom in our work and would promote a balanced approach to all outstanding issues regarding our agenda.

Like my predecessors, I spared no effort to bring about a solution to these problems. I shall therefore continue my consultations, both here and in Geneva, during the period between sessions, with a view to laying the

ground for a smooth and effective start to our next session. I am fully aware that the task is a daunting one because of the fundamental divergence of views that exist within the Conference on the international arms-control and disarmament agenda in the post-cold-war era and following the indefinite extension of the NPT and, in the final analysis, on the role of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum at this crucial juncture.

Needless to say, such an arms-control and disarmament agenda must take fully into account our common concerns to further strengthen non-proliferation in all its aspects and the importance of the process of nuclear disarmament and strike a balance between the conventional and nuclear aspects of our endeavours. I am confident that the outcome of the deliberations of the First Committee will contribute to laying the foundation for a renewed direction and sense of purpose in the Conference on Disarmament for the future. For my part, and with the cooperation of all members of the Conference, I shall continue to seek ways and means to contribute to the attainment of that objective.

It remains only for me to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, and to Mr. Bensmail, the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference, and their small team of dedicated staff, for their valuable support and assistance to the Conference during its 1995 session.

I should like now to add one or two remarks with regard to the draft resolution I would like to circulate for the consideration of the members of the First Committee. As President of the Conference on Disarmament, I have with me copies of the draft resolution on the adoption of the report of the Conference, and I should like any delegation that so wishes to attend a consultative meeting to consider it.

The Chairman: I am sure that delegations will take note of the information just provided by the representative of Morocco regarding the draft resolution on adoption of the report of the Conference on Disarmament. Delegations will also note that there will be a meeting tomorrow afternoon to discuss the draft resolution.

Mr. Vajpayee (India): May I at the outset join all the previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are confident that under your guidance the deliberations of the First Committee will have a successful outcome. I should also like to convey my congratulations to the other officers of the Committee and to assure you all of the full cooperation of my delegation in your endeavours.

The year 1995 is, as has been remarked, a particularly significant one, not only because of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, which provides us with an opportunity to learn from past experience and to prepare for the challenges ahead, but also because major developments have taken place this year in the disarmament field. While negotiations on conventional weapons, with a view to restricting the use of land-mines, and on the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty are moving ahead satisfactorily, we cannot ignore the unconditional and indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), a major, if flawed, disarmament instrument. The nuclear arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States have now been legitimized for all time, and the division of the world into nuclear haves and have-nots has been perpetuated. In our view, this is a serious development, and one that is bound to have an impact on all disarmament negotiations unless the nuclear-weapon States commit themselves to adopt further measures towards the elimination of their nuclear weapons within a time-bound phased programme. However, we have noted with concern that since May of this year there has been marked reluctance on the part of some nuclear-weapon States even to discuss such a programme of phased elimination of such weapons of mass destruction. The seriousness of the situation is further compounded by the recent nuclear tests carried out by some nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT.

Let it not be said that we do not appreciate the significance of the progress that has been made in nuclear-arms control. Yet, despite that progress, the number of nuclear weapons that will be left over even after the reductions are completed is not only a factor potentially capable of destabilizing international peace and security but is more than enough to destroy the world many times over. Our Foreign Minister, speaking in the General Assembly a few weeks ago, said:

> "Our goal — shared, I believe by most of us here — is a world from which nuclear weapons have been eliminated. The nuclear-weapon States claim to share this goal, but their present objective is to retain nuclear weapons while making sure others do not get them.
>
> "The logic of this is hard to understand. It cannot be argued that the security of a few countries depends on their having nuclear weapons and that that of the

rest depends on their not having them." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 12th meeting, p. 16)*

Security doctrines are still based on ideas of nuclear deterrence and have moved on to newer nuances, such as minimum deterrence and mutually assured safety. These doctrines are being used to justify the continued retention and the option of possible use of nuclear weapons.

The end of the cold war and the emergence of an increasingly interdependent world linked by the imperatives of economy, commerce and technology challenge the logic of these doctrines. It is in this context that the Heads of State and Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, meeting recently in Cartagena called

> "for a renunciation of strategic doctrines based upon the use of nuclear weapons and ... for the adoption of an action plan for the elimination of all nuclear weapons, within a time-bound framework".

They further called on

> "the Conference on Disarmament to establish, on a priority basis, an ad hoc committee to commence negotiations early in 1996 on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament and for the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework, as envisaged in paragraph 50 of the [Final Document of the] first special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament, and to this end they decided to introduce a resolution at the fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly".

We are aware of the heavy agenda of the Conference in 1996, yet we are sure that it would be possible to find slots for the ad hoc committee to start meeting early in 1996. We intend to work with other non-aligned countries to introduce a resolution on this issue.

We believe that the comprehensive test-ban treaty, the proposed convention on the cut-off of fissile material and the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons, on which a resolution — 49/76 E — was adopted last year by an overwhelming majority, are essential steps in the process of eliminating nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework. As our Prime Minister stated last week in Cartagena, speaking of the negotiations for a comprehensive test-ban treaty and the cut-off convention:

> "While the aims of both these treaties are laudable, and we support them wholeheartedly, we must ensure that we do not lose yet another opportunity to obtain a commitment to universal and comprehensive disarmament."

Turning to the negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty themselves, we are satisfied with the progress made so far in the Conference on Disarmament, though we are aware that much work remains to be done and that many significant gaps in positions remain. We are determined to continue our contribution to this process with a view to concluding a global treaty in 1996.

As I have already stated, in our view the comprehensive test-ban treaty must be an integral step in the process of nuclear disarmament. Developing new warheads or refining existing ones after a treaty is in place, using innovative technology, would be as contrary to the spirit of the comprehensive test-ban treaty as violating the NPT would be to the spirit of non-proliferation. The treaty must therefore contain a binding commitment on the international community, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to take further measures, within an agreed time-frame, towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The scope of the treaty should cover the complete cessation of nuclear tests by all States, in all environments and for all time. We do not believe that there should be any exceptions for carrying out nuclear tests under any circumstances. This should thus inhibit, in a non-discriminatory manner, the proliferation of nuclear weapons in both the horizontal and the vertical dimensions. This needs to be clearly spelt out in the article on the scope of the comprehensive test-ban treaty.

We believe that the verification system being designed for the treaty should be universal in its application, non-discriminatory and should guarantee equal access to all States. The International Data Centre, working as an integral part of the Technical Secretariat, should have the capacity to receive, assess and analyse data from the four components of the International Monitoring System (IMS). On-site inspections should be carried out only in rare circumstances and in the least intrusive and most cost-effective manner possible. We believe that on-site requests should be based on IMS data. Full opportunity should be provided to the State party to be inspected to assist in clarifying the situation through a mandatory consultation and clarification procedure. The Executive Council should thoroughly examine the request and take a decision by a three-fourths majority of its members.

A managed access regime should operate during the on-site inspection to maintain a balance between the rights and obligations of the State party being inspected. Such an approach will deter frivolous or abusive requests and would add to the credibility of the treaty. I have outlined the basic thrust of our approach to the negotiations on the treaty, and I hope that we will be able to reach agreement on these issues, at both the political and the technical level, early next year.

It will be recalled that India was one of the lead sponsors of a resolution — 48/75 L — which was adopted by consensus in 1993, on "Prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear devices". In our view, this was a major step ahead in the process of nuclear disarmament. We therefore regret that negotiations did not begin on this issue in the course of the last two years. We believe that unless this convention is squarely placed in the context of nuclear disarmament, it is unlikely to gather the universal support it should. Some nuclear-weapon States have already stopped the production of fissile material. A convention that merely recognizes that fact and seeks to universalize it as a purely non-proliferation measure is unlikely to be meaningful.

We sincerely hope that the international community will exhibit the same political will to ban nuclear weapons as it did to ban biological and chemical weapons. India had actively participated in the negotiations on the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and was among the first States to sign it. We are now in the process of completing our internal procedures for ratifying it. India, however, does not possess chemical weapons and therefore hopes that those major States possessing such weapons will make strenuous efforts to ratify the Convention as soon as possible.

As we approach the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention, we note with some concern the continued existence of discriminatory ad hoc export control regimes. We believe that all discriminatory restrictions contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention should be removed. Our stand against *ad hoc* control regimes is well known and received high-level endorsement at the recent summit of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cartagena. The Heads of State and Government of the non-aligned countries noted that restrictions being placed on access to technology through the imposition of ad hoc export-control regimes with exclusive membership, under the pretext of proliferation concerns, tended to impede the economic and social development of developing countries.

In our view, there is a need for us to agree on multilaterally negotiated, universally accepted, non-discriminatory norms and guidelines for making sensitive technologies available to all countries for peaceful purposes. This approach would apply also to the discussions under way to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). As a State Party to the BWC, India, after actively participating in the Experts' meeting, the Special Conference and the Ad Hoc Group, is of the view that the strengthened Convention should facilitate and not restrict the peaceful uses of biotechnology. A commitment in this regard should form an essential part of any verification regime.

Moving from weapons of mass destruction to conventional weapons, we do not see that we, the international community, have a choice between weapons that could exterminate entire populations and the so-called conventional weapons. We feel that, while pressing ahead towards the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, we should also take steps to curb the excessive production, development and build-up of conventional weapons beyond the legitimate defence requirements of States. Arms transfers need to be transparent, responsible and should not aggravate tensions in any region. This applies in particular to the transfer of small arms and light weapons. Innovative means for international cooperation to control such transfers need to be developed. The diversion of small arms and light weapons to non-State entities and the illicit arms trade require urgent international action, as the impact on the social stability of countries and the destructive consequences of fuelling terrorism, subversion and drug trafficking are dangers to which all countries are subject today.

At the recent Review Conference of the States Parties to the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, India had supported a total ban on a new conventional weapon while it was still at a prototype stage. We were however satisfied that we were able to adopt a protocol which banned the use and transfer of blinding laser weapons. We hope that before it is too late we will reach agreement also on a ban on the production of these terrible weapons.

We were not so happy with the outcome of the negotiations on the Protocol on land-mines. In responding to the humanitarian needs of civilians affected by the indiscriminate effects of the detritus of war, member States parties to the Protocol made major progress in trying to

evolve a consensus and it was our view that we could have successfully concluded our negotiations in Vienna. We were, therefore, bitterly disappointed, in view of the urgency of the crisis, at the postponement of the final phase of the Conference. We look forward to a successful conclusion early next year and hope that all countries, in the interests of the humanitarian cause, will accept restrictions on their own systems of weaponry. India, having agreed to the extension of the scope of the Protocol to non-international armed conflicts as defined in the Geneva Conventions, has proposed a ban on the use of land-mines in such conflicts and a ban on the transfer of these weapons. We made this latter proposal in order to encourage the extension of the existing voluntary moratoriums. We would, therefore, be happy to join other sponsors of the draft resolution on a moratorium on the export of land-mines, with the goal of their eventual elimination as viable and humane alternatives are developed. Until such time as agreement is reached on a strengthened Protocol II to the inhumane weapons Convention, we expect all countries to exercise the greatest control in the transfer of mines. As we have had occasion to state elsewhere, India does not export, and does not intend to export, any kind of land-mines.

Therefore, on conventional weapons, with the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, to which India has contributed regularly, a move has been made towards transparency, and with the Review Conference of the Convention on certain conventional weapons some steps have been taken towards restricting and in some cases prohibiting the use of some kinds of conventional weapons.

On weapons of mass destruction the progress is less satisfactory; the Chemical Weapons Convention has yet to enter into force; and the Biological Weapons Convention and the comprehensive test-ban treaty still require a great deal of work.

As we expect negotiations and action on all these important subjects to be completed by the end of 1996, we believe that 1997 would be an opportune time to review progress in the entire field of disarmament in the post-cold-war era. The Heads of State and Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries have called for the convening of a fourth special session on disarmament in 1997 that would review progress in the process of disarmament and mobilize public opinion in favour of the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and of the control and reduction of conventional weapons. My delegation will work with other interested delegations on a draft resolution on this subject.

This morning the representative of Pakistan referred to the tension in South Asia. Let me make it clear that there is no tension and no threat to international peace and security on the part of India. There is no situation that cannot be resolved by bilateral talks. As the Committee may be aware, India has been calling for bilateral talks with Pakistan for the past several years. We have indicated, at the highest political level, our willingness to discuss all issues, including Kashmir. Our offer has been backed by a series of detailed proposals for confidence-building measures, including disarmament-related confidence-building measures.

Our repeated offers of dialogue have received no response from Pakistan. We therefore continue to be amazed that Pakistani representatives take every opportunity in multilateral forums to raise alarms and accusations about the so-called dispute over Kashmir. The only dispute is the continued occupation of Indian territory by Pakistan. I remind the Committee that the issue brought to the United Nations by India in 1948 was the aggression by Pakistan against India.

As for the proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, our views on this perennial issue are too well known to bear any annual repetition.

I conclude by inviting Pakistan to sit at the negotiating table to try sincerely to resolve differences so that both countries might be able to work for the well-being and prosperity of their peoples.

The Chairman. May I remind delegations that there are still five speakers on the list for this meeting, plus at least two statements in right of reply and my short statement on the programme of work for the next few days. I wish only to draw the attention of speakers to the time restraints and would ask them to try to limit their statements as much as possible.

Mrs. Regmi (Nepal): On behalf of the Nepalese delegation and on my own behalf, I congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I am confident that under your able guidance the Committee will have fruitful deliberations.

The general debate of the First Committee is taking place at a time when the climate of international peace and security is becoming increasingly positive. The year 1995

is even more exciting. It is a year in which the United Nations, the relentless pursuer for the past five decades of a vision of a weapon-free world, is commemorating its fiftieth anniversary. Another major focus of the year is the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. These two events are the most memorable ones, both for the United Nations and for the international community.

With the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty a major milestone has been passed in the field of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament. Now is the time for the international community faithfully to implement the objectives adopted at the Conference. Foremost among these is the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Nepal welcomes the progress made thus far in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty by the end of 1996.

Of equal importance to my delegation is the early conclusion of a treaty banning the production of weapons grade fissile material for weapons use. We feel that such a treaty would be an additional instrument in our efforts to cap nuclear proliferation. Nepal therefore expresses deep disappointment at the resumption of nuclear testing and hopes that this series of testing will not impede the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty in the stipulated time-frame.

Nepal fully supports the efforts geared towards eliminating other categories of weapons of mass destruction. The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is a most important instrument for ensuring regional as well as global stability. Like other delegations, Nepal supports the call for the intensification of efforts for its ratification in order to make it operational as soon as possible. Outlawing this category of weapons is equally necessary considering their devastating effects on the civilian population.

There is no doubt that weapons of mass destruction continue to command international attention, but we must not lose sight of the problems caused by conventional weapons. We wish here to point out that in the era following the Second World War, conventional weapons have caused the most misery to mankind and have always been a destabilizing factor. Nepal is, therefore, ready to support the draft resolution that is to be submitted by Japan for the establishment of a group of experts to examine ways and means of preventing and reducing the accumulation and circulation of such weapons. My delegation believes that consideration of conventional weapons should be an item of priority on the agenda of the United Nations. We are pleased to note the importance given by the Secretary-General to the importance of what he calls "micro-disarmament". Transparency in armaments, especially in the area of conventional weapons, is extremely important. Nepal therefore welcomes the United Nations's Register of Conventional Arms and continues to support the work of the Secretary-General to further expand and develop this system by 1997.

We also consider that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in more and more regions of the world should be further encouraged, as these efforts go a long way towards attainment of the goal of global disarmament. It is precisely for this reason that Nepal supported the General Assembly resolutions 49/72 and 49/82 calling for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia and implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, respectively, and would like to reiterate its commitments to these concepts. My delegation welcomes the recently concluded Pelindaba Treaty, which will establish the African nuclear-weapon-free zone. The decision a few days ago by the Governments of the United Kingdom, France and the United States agreeing to sign the Protocol to the Treaty of Rarotonga is viewed by my delegation as yet another important step towards peace and stability in that region.

Nepal holds the firm belief that regional and subregional approaches to confidence-building measures can contribute immensely towards removing the mistrust that is the fundamental cause of the arms race. This is the objective pursued by the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament. Nepal was greatly disturbed to read the Secretary-General's report (A/50/380) suggesting possible closure of the Regional Centres for Disarmament.

The Kathmandu Centre has been instrumental in sensitizing regional opinion in favour of confidence- and security-building measures through regional and subregional dialogue, thus making a significant contribution to regional peace and disarmament. We urge support for the continued operation and further strengthening of the Kathmandu Centre as an essential promoter of the "Kathmandu Process" — to promote regional peace and disarmament dialogue in Asia and the Pacific region. The Kathmandu Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific has always been effective and we address our appeal to Member States, both from Asia and the Pacific region and beyond, as well as non-governmental organizations and foundations to make voluntary contributions to allow the Kathmandu Centre to remain

functional. In this context, my delegation also fully supports the establishment of a disarmament subcentre in Hiroshima as a subsidiary body of the Kathmandu Centre on the basis of voluntary contributions. As a matter of fact, the establishment of such subsidiary bodies in the region on a financially self-maintained basis is indeed welcome to my delegation, as we are convinced that they will contribute further to the cause of disarmament and peace.

Finally, the link between disarmament and development cannot be overemphasized. The removal of threats to international peace and security depends on our efforts to intensify socio-economic development. Nepal therefore earnestly hopes that the resources released from disarmament will be diverted for the purposes of the social and economic development of developing countries, particularly the least developed and those that are land-locked. Such a use of the peace dividend, in our view, will be in the larger interest of the peace, security and well-being of the people.

Ms. Darmanin (Malta): Since this is the first time that I have addressed the Committee, may I, on behalf of my delegation, congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election. Under your skilful guidance, this Committee will undoubtedly register progress and fulfil many expectations. My congratulations are also addressed to the other members of the Bureau, whose help will be invaluable in assisting the proceedings of this Committee.

Allow me, on behalf of the delegation of Malta, to make a few reflections on our work during the coming weeks. In expressing its views, this delegation again associates itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union. The work of the First Committee during this session is of unique importance. It coincides with the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and immediately follows the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This landmark decision is another step in the fulfilment of the primary mandate of the Organization, namely the maintenance of international peace and security. The will and commitment which led to the indefinite extension should be pursued to achieve universality. Equally important are the other Principles and Objectives agreed to by the States Parties calling for nuclear-weapon-free zones, nuclear safeguards and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The underlying notion of all the principles of the NPT is that of providing States with security and assuring them of security. Malta notes with satisfaction the assertion by the Conference of State Parties that further steps towards security assurances to non-nuclear weapons States

> "could take the form of an internationally legally binding instrument".

We pledge our support to work towards this end.

The most recent nuclear tests indicate the clear need to translate the utmost restraint into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The commitment to finalize the treaty by the end of 1996 requires sustained momentum. This, coupled with a cut-off treaty on the production of fissile material, is evidence of the will of the international community to achieve disarmament.

The threat of destruction by nuclear weapons should not be the only focus of our attention. Increasingly, this Committee has taken into account the ills and suffering brought about by conventional weaponry. Fifty years ago the founding fathers pledged to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Malta shares in the grave concern expressed by the international community with regard to the suffering brought to millions of people through the use and indiscriminate effects of anti-personnel land-mines. We will again join in sponsoring the draft resolution calling for a moratorium on the use of land-mines and the need to develop more humane and viable alternatives.

Also requiring immediate attention and concerted action is the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and the strengthening of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

The maintenance of peace and security rests on confidence between and amongst nations. During the years of the cold war the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) discovered that confidence-building was the most effective element in the promotion of a broader concept of security. This concept is guided not only by politico-military concerns, but by a will to seek a more comprehensive stability.

The Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has been foremost in the promotion of such confidence- and security-building measures. The recently adopted Code of Conduct further elaborates mechanisms aimed at enhancing cooperation and trust between States members of OSCE. At the United Nations, the resolutions

on transparency in armaments and those related to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms undoubtedly contribute to the growing awareness of the need for a better flow of information in the pursuit of peace.

The framework of cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE is an effective and exemplary contribution towards the enhancement of regional security. This is of particular satisfaction for my delegation since it is the outcome of a proposal first launched by Malta at Helsinki in 1992, namely that the CSCE declare itself a regional arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the Charter. Comprehensive regional security structures could be more effective instruments for identifying, analysing and containing tensions which threaten to lead to the outbreak of hostilities or conflict. Such structures cannot act in isolation. They must monitor existing realities and potentially threatening situations with a view to containing them. Time and again experience has shown that a multifaceted approach which links vital areas such as human rights, fundamental freedoms and social justice into the broader network of comprehensive security is the foundation for stability giving peoples and nations the reassurance of peace, dignity and freedom.

The Mediterranean is one such area where perils, if left unattended to, threaten to transform the historic "middle-sea" into a permanent lake of instability. Malta has consistently supported the idea of a conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean and, within the concept of stability in the Mediterranean, has proposed two distinct but correlated ideas, namely that of a "Council for the Mediterranean" and that of a "Stability Pact for the Mediterranean".

A "Council for the Mediterranean", through an association of Mediterranean States, would facilitate cooperation at the highest level and, through a parliamentary aspect, could enhance joint action in the identification and resolution of problems of common concern.

At the concluding conference on the "Stability Pact" for Europe, Malta proposed a stability pact for the Mediterranean. Such a pact, based on a round-table system, would facilitate discussions to pre-empt new threats to the security of peoples and States in the region and would bring together parties in dispute. The fact that this proposal was generally well received is encouraging and spurs us to pursue it further.

Both proposals are intended to foster dialogue in a region of turbulence. The region's diversities are many and the threats pervasive. The common understanding of such diversities can be achieved only through dialogue. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta, Professor Guido de Marco, in his statement to the General Assembly at the fiftieth session, pointed out the dangers and possible solutions for the Mediterranean:

> "The Mediterranean's wealth lies in its heritage of cultural, religious and social diversity. A forced mutation of this rich mosaic into uniformity would be destabilizing. Confidence-building and mutual understanding create the route that leads to security and cooperation. We must walk that arduous path. Within multicultural diversity we must discover the common values that help foster dialogue. This requires shedding preconceived notions. It requires strong political will. It requires that we supplant instinctive mistrust with a spirit of mutual respect." (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 10th meeting, p. 22*)

The time dedicated by the United Nations over the years to defusing and resolving issues in the Mediterranean is indicative of the weight which the international community attaches to the region and the spill-over potential of past and current crises. A successful process in this region is important, not only for its own sake, but also as a means of inspiring patterns of cooperation in other areas characterized by multicultural diversity.

Just recently we completed the commemorative meeting of the General Assembly, held in celebration of its fiftieth anniversary. Our leaders stressed the need to profit from the new post-cold-war environment in order to register and consolidate progress in the field of disarmament. Our negotiations on security and disarmament issues in this Committee must reflect the will of our Heads of State and Government to translate words into deeds for the benefit of present and future generations.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic): At the outset, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Lao delegation, I would like to express my satisfaction at seeing you, an illustrious diplomat of Mongolia and, more important, a personal and good friend, presiding over the First Committee of the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. I am confident that, with your diplomatic skill and talent, you will guide the work of the Committee to a successful outcome. I would also like to pay tribute to your

predecessor, Ambassador Luis Valencia Rodriguez of Ecuador, for his able leadership of the Committee last year.

The current session of the First Committee is being held at a special juncture in the history of the United Nations. Throughout half a century, the Organization has played an important role in the maintenance of international peace and security. While we have witnessed its achievements, we are still living in an atmosphere of uncertainty and facing many challenges. The existence of nuclear arsenals and other weapons of mass destruction remains, unfortunately, a source of concern and preoccupation for humanity. In our opinion, it is high time the world community became aware of this danger, redoubled its efforts and reacted together with great determination to reduce and eliminate these dangerous weapons from the face of our planet.

Since the last session, the international community has made tremendous efforts — but not easy ones — in the field of disarmament efforts which constitute an important element for peace and security in the next century, namely a decision to extend indefinitely the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), together with two other decisions adopted without a vote at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the NPT. The Lao delegation attaches great importance to the latter two decisions: one on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament", and the second on "Strengthening the Review Process for the Treaty".

It is our view that these two decisions constitute an essential element in, and framework for, the effective implementation of the provisions of the Treaty. We very much hope that a full and vigorous implementation of the three decisions, conceived as a package, would progressively foster dynamic steps towards nuclear disarmament.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic, as a non-nuclear-weapon State, also considers that a comprehensive test-ban treaty, once concluded, will mark an important step towards nuclear disarmament. It is encouraging to note that the world community, especially the nuclear-weapon States, has recently shown its commitment to the early conclusion of the treaty. In this context, we welcome the remarkable progress made in the Conference on Disarmament towards the successful conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty — a total ban on nuclear testing — no later, we hope, than in 1996. We also support and welcome the recent announcement by some nuclear-weapon States of their decision on the true zero-yield option, which would, we think, give an impetus to the effort towards non-proliferation now under way.

In parallel with the negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty conducted in the Conference on Disarmament, as agreed at the Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the immediate commencement and early conclusion of a convention banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices — the cut-off treaty — requires great efforts and a true willingness on the part of the members of the Conference on Disarmament to overcome the difficulties encountered. We share the view that the work of the Ad Hoc Committee, established early this year by the Conference on Disarmament, will be able to begin work early next year.

The issue of security assurances remains also a serious concern of the vast majority of the non-nuclear-weapon States. Having voluntarily renounced nuclear weapons, the non-nuclear-weapon States should have the right to receive such assurances in the form of an internationally legally binding instrument. In our view, it would be unfair and unfortunate if those that "have" nuclear weapons did not give these assurances under a legally binding form to those that "have not".

In the field of confidence-building measures and disarmament we generally support the creation in different parts of the world of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In this regard, we welcome the recent announcement by France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America of their intention to sign the relevant protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga in the first half of 1996. This declaration is a positive contribution to efforts towards the nuclear-non-proliferation process. In the same vein, we also welcome the conclusion of a treaty on an African nuclear-weapons-free zone — the Treaty of Pelindaba.

As a member of the community of South-East Asia, a region well known for its activities in favour of the maintenance of peace and security, the Lao People's Democratic Republic is sincerely contributing to efforts aimed at making this region a zone of peace, amity and cooperation and a zone free of nuclear weapons. True to its consistent policy of peace, friendship and cooperation with all countries the world over, our country will spare no effort to continue to work in this direction.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic has experienced a three-decades-long and devastating war.

More than 20 years after the end of this cruel conflict, the Lao people are still facing the deadly legacy of the war. Over 50 per cent of the Lao territory is littered with unexploded ordnance, one type dropped from the air (cluster bombs) and another left over from ground battles (land-mines, mortar shells and munitions). Unexploded ordnance not only continues to maim and kill innocent and defenceless people, it also obstructs economic development, thus worsening the poverty of the population in the affected areas.

Since 1975, with the cooperation of, and assistance from, friendly countries, international organizations and non-governmental organizations, the Lao Government has done its utmost to clear the unexploded ordnance. We have registered many successes but much still remains to be done. Recently, on 1 August 1995, the Lao Government, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), signed a Trust Fund for Clearance of Unexploded Ordnance.

The Fund has the definite objective of providing special resources for a coherent programme of unexploded ordnance clearance, community awareness, surveys and other related initiatives. The clearance programme is to be managed by a steering committee chaired by the Lao Government, with representatives from concerned ministries and provinces, as well as representatives from UNDP and UNICEF. Designated as the ministry responsible for coordination, overall management and monitoring of the clearance programme, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare is now preparing a yearly work plan to serve as a guide in the clearance efforts and to determine which areas should be cleared as a priority. It is our hope that friendly countries, international organizations and non-governmental organizations would contribute to this Trust Fund and make the undertaking a reality.

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, located in Kathmandu, is playing an important role in the promotion of regional dialogue, thus contributing to regional peace and disarmament. We hope that with voluntary funding this Centre will continue to function.

The current commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations makes this year an exceptional one — a year which provides the world community with an unprecedented occasion, not only to review and assess the achievements in the field of disarmament, but also to exert joint efforts to accomplish, gradually, what remains to be done. More important, in good conscience and together, we should all strive to achieve, progressively, our ultimate goal, that of general and complete disarmament. Our hard work and dedication will help prepare this long path to enable the next generation to celebrate the commemoration of the next half-century in an atmosphere of genuine peace and international cooperation. In this undertaking, the Lao People's Democratic Republic would surely do what it can to offer its modest contribution.

The Chairman: May I remind all delegations making statements that we have very little time left and appeal to them to keep their remarks as brief as possible.

I now call on the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mr. Kung (International Committee of the Red Cross): The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) would like, at the outset, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee and to thank you for giving us an opportunity to contribute to this debate.

A few weeks ago we assumed that we would be speaking at this session of the First Committee on the results of the first Review Conference of the parties to the 1981 inhumane weapons Convention. As delegations know, the Conference was adjourned as it was unable to reach agreement on amendments to Protocol II, on land-mines. We share the disappointment that was felt in Vienna when this decision had to be taken. However, we are of the opinion that several important gains were made — in particular, the adoption of the Protocol on blinding laser weapons and agreement on certain aspects of Protocol II.

The ICRC would like to express its gratitude for the opportunity to take such an active role in the Review Conference. In doing so, we strive to fulfil our mandate to promote the development of international humanitarian law in a way that gives due weight to humanitarian concerns. Our comments and suggestions are based on our wide practical experience of armed conflicts and the problems they engender.

The adoption, on 13 October 1995, of Protocol IV, on blinding laser weapons, is a major achievement. To our knowledge, this is the first time since 1868 that a weapon has been prohibited before it could be used on the battlefield. Thus, humanity has been spared the horror that such blinding weapons would have created. Quite apart from the actual wording of the instrument, the effect of its

adoption is a strong message that States will not tolerate the deliberate blinding of people in any circumstances. Thus, it is a triumph of civilization over barbarity. It is also a major achievement that this Protocol includes a prohibition on the transfer of blinding laser weapons. The ICRC sincerely hopes that States will adhere to it as quickly as possible and will take all appropriate measures to ensure respect for its provisions.

During the three-week session of the Review Conference in Vienna, 36 people were killed and 243 maimed by land-mines in Cambodia alone, and worldwide about 1,600 people suffered the same fate. During the same period, medical workers also paid a heavy price, 7 being killed and 21 badly injured as a result of the explosion of anti-vehicle mines in Zaire, Rwanda and Mozambique. These sad statistics illustrate the urgent need to deal effectively with the land-mine crisis. All delegations in Vienna were certainly aware of the importance of reaching agreement on amendments to Protocol II.

The problem centred on the criteria that should be preponderant in any decision. During the last few days of the session, many delegations began to speak more openly of their difficulties, and these illustrated in particular the shortcomings of a technical solution. Some delegations indicated that they would need grace periods of up to 15 years to fit their mines with a minimum metal content and equip them with self-destructing or self-deactivating systems. If mines continue to be sown at the present rate, up to 75 million could be added to the existing 110 million in such a period. Even more disturbing is the uncertainty as to the reliability that may be expected from the so-called "smart mines" that are to be developed.

The ICRC therefore appeals to States to evaluate whether measures short of a total ban on anti-personnel land-mines will, in fact, put a stop to the present situation. Is the limited military utility of anti-personnel land-mines really worth the tragedy they are causing? Should not strict controls be placed also on anti-vehicle mines, which regularly kill or maim civilians, including humanitarian workers who are trying to help the victims of war? We earnestly hope that States will rise above short-term national interests, in favour of the interests of humanity as a whole.

The Review Conference is due to reconvene in January and again in April 1996. We hope that during this period many more States will ratify or accede to the Convention and that those which were unable to participate at the Vienna session will be able to do so at the sessions due to be held in Geneva.

We trust that the gains made at the Vienna session will remain — namely, the agreement to extend the application of Protocol II to non-international armed conflicts; the assignment of responsibility for the clearance of mines at the end of active hostilities; and measures to enable humanitarian personnel to accomplish their work on behalf of victims of conflicts in mined areas. In this regard, we are particularly grateful to States for their willingness to give specific protection to personnel of humanitarian organizations, including the ICRC and the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

The work of the Conference, however, will have an effect beyond regulation of the use of land-mines. The Convention as a whole must be seen to be a living and effective instrument. We earnestly hope that the Convention will be reviewed frequently and regularly, so that the international community may be enabled to evaluate the effectiveness of its existing provisions, to encourage further accessions and to allow for amendments or additional Protocols as the need arises.

Our concern about land-mines and blinding weapons is rooted in our own experience of a much larger phenomenon — the virtually unrestricted flow of vast quantities of weapons around the world. Our first-hand experience in the dozens of conflicts that are raging in various regions is that enormous quantities of small arms are available to almost any organization or individual seeking them and that, where these arms are used, humanitarian law is either unknown or simply not respected.

The ICRC strongly encourages this Committee to make the issue of global arms transfers a matter of high priority and to consider both the inclusion of small-arms transfers in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and possible restraints on such transfers. For its part, the ICRC intends to comply with the request of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on the Protection of War Victims by actively studying the relationship between arms availability and violations of international humanitarian law. We shall publish a report on this issue late in 1996.

An important step that this body has taken in regard to arms transfers is its resolution encouraging national moratoriums on the export of anti-personnel mines. An estimated 100 million land-mines remain stockpiled

throughout the world, and the low level of pledges at the International Meeting on Mine Clearance in July 1995 demonstrates that international commitments are insufficient to ensure the rapid removal of mines already in place. Any relaxation of attempts to bar exports of anti-personnel mines will only exacerbate an already dramatic situation.

The gas attack on civilians on the Tokyo underground, which took place in March, and several similar incidents remind us of the urgency of controlling the threat of chemical and biological weapons. We urge States that have not already done so to ratify the chemical weapons Convention and to ensure its early entry into force. We welcome efforts to introduce a verification regime into the biological weapons Convention and encourage non-party States to adhere to that Convention at the earliest opportunity.

Finally, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the nuclear age we should like to recall the position of the ICRC on this matter. Any use of weapons that would violate the norms of existing international humanitarian law, including customary law, is already prohibited.

In addition, we hope that any deliberations on nuclear weapons will take into account what would probably happen if the threshold were breached and nuclear weapons were actually used. The ICRC has already indicated its opinion that the only effective solution for such weapons is their total prohibition. This has been achieved for chemical and biological weapons and for blinding laser weapons. We hope that the end of the cold war will allow States to work towards achieving the same result for nuclear weapons.

Mr. Tóth (Hungary): After 6 o'clock I think short and concentrated statements are the "flavour of the week" but I should like to begin by expressing my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, in the Chair.

I should like to introduce today a draft resolution on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction on behalf of the following delegations: Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

According to the draft resolution, which will be circulated under the symbol A/C.1/50/L.1, the General Assembly would note with satisfaction that more than 130 States are parties to the Convention, including all the permanent members of the Security Council.

The General Assembly would recall its resolution 48/65, adopted without a vote at the forty-eighth session, in which it "commended the final report of the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts to Identify and Examine Potential Verification Measures from a Scientific and Technical Standpoint".

It would recall further its resolution 49/86, adopted without a vote at the forty-ninth session, in which it welcomed the final report of the Special Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, held in September 1994, adopted by consensus, in which the States parties

> "agreed to establish an ad hoc group, open to all States parties, whose objective shall be to consider appropriate measures, including possible verification measures, and draft proposals to strengthen the Convention, to be included ... in a legally binding instrument to be submitted for the consideration of the States parties".

Further, in the draft resolution, the Assembly would recall the exchange of information and data agreed to in the Final Declaration of the Third Review Conference, as well as the provisions of the Convention related to scientific and technological cooperation, and the related provisions of the Final Document of the Third Review Conference, the final report of the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts and the final report of the Special Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, held in September 1994.

In its operative part the Assembly would welcome the work begun by the Ad Hoc Group and would urge it, in pursuing its mandate, to complete its work as soon as possible and submit its report, which shall be adopted by consensus, to the States parties, to be considered at the Fourth Review Conference or later at a special conference.

It would request the Secretary-General to continue to render the necessary assistance to the depository Governments of the Convention and to provide such services as might be required for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Third Review Conference, as well as the decisions contained in the Final Report of the Special Conference, including all necessary assistance to the Ad Hoc Group.

The Assembly would note that, at the request of the States parties, a Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention will be held at Geneva in 1996 and that, following appropriate consultations, a Preparatory Committee for that Conference will be formed, open to all States parties to the Convention, and that the Committee will meet at Geneva in 1996.

Finally, the Assembly would call upon all signatory States that had not yet ratified the Convention to do so without delay, and would also call upon those other States that had not signed the Convention to become parties thereto at an early date, thus contributing to the achievement of universal adherence to the Convention.

It is the hope of the sponsors that the draft resolution will generate wide consensus in this body.

The Chairman: The Committee has heard the last speaker on the list of speakers for this afternoon's meeting and thus has concluded its general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items.

Before making a statement on the programme of work of the Committee I shall call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind delegations that the ground rules for such interventions apply.

Mr. Sha Zukang (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): In the past few days the Chinese delegation has listened attentively to the statements made by the various delegations in the general debate. As a number of countries have expressed concern in varying degrees about the nuclear tests carried out by China I wish to take this opportunity to elaborate further on the position and policies of the Chinese Government on the issue of nuclear tests.

The position of the Chinese Government on the question of nuclear testing is consistent and clear-cut.

First, the Chinese Government has all along exercised the utmost restraint with regard to its nuclear tests, always keeping either the scale or the number of its nuclear tests to the minimum. That is so because China has consistently opposed the nuclear-arms race. China for its part has never had the intention of participating in the nuclear-arms race nor has it done so. It has been the position of the Chinese Government that there should be a complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, just as there is a comprehensive prohibition of chemical and biological weapons. Furthermore, the Chinese Government has, time and again, stated that upon the entry into force of the comprehensive test-ban treaty China will cease nuclear testing.

Secondly, China's possession of a limited number of nuclear weapons is solely for self-defence. China's nuclear weapons are not directed against any other country and therefore constitute no threat to any other country, much less to international peace and security. It was under certain historical and international circumstances that China developed and came into possession of a limited number of nuclear weapons: China was compelled to do so for the sake of self-defence after having been subjected to repeated nuclear threats by certain nuclear Powers. China opposes hegemonism and pursues an independent foreign policy of peace. As is known to all, China is not allied to any major Power or major military blocs nor does it come under the nuclear umbrella of other countries. Precisely because of its own experience of being subjected to nuclear threats, China always opposes the policy of nuclear deterrence and will never base its own security on a nuclear threat against other countries. Since 1964, when it came into possession of nuclear weapons, China has unilaterally undertaken unconditionally not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and has undertaken unconditionally not to use or threaten to use such weapons against non-nuclear-weapon countries and nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Pursuant to such a policy, the Chinese Government, as early as 1973, signed Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, undertaking not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the Latin American nuclear-weapon-free zone, not to test, manufacture, produce, stockpile, install or deploy nuclear weapons in this zone, and not to send any nuclear transport or delivery vehicle across the territory, territorial sea or air space of this zone.

In 1986, after the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty entered into force, the Chinese Government signed Protocols 2 and 3 of the Treaty in the following year, stating that China would respect the status of the zone and would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against this zone and would not carry out nuclear tests in the zone.

The Chinese Government rejoices at the recent substantive progress achieved by the African countries in their effort to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. Proceeding from its consistent position, China resolutely supports the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone

Treaty and will undertake its corresponding obligations towards that zone.

In recent years, with the end of the cold war, China has called on the nuclear-weapon countries concerned to enter into immediate negotiations for the conclusion of treaties on the non-first use of nuclear weapons among the nuclear countries and on the non-use or threat of use of such weapons against non-nuclear-weapon countries and nuclear-weapon-free zones, thereby supporting the negotiations and the conclusion of legally binding international instruments on the provision of security assurances for the non-nuclear countries. All of these facts show that China's policy on nuclear weapons has been consistent, open and above board, exemplifying the sincerity and persistent effort of the Chinese Government to maintain international peace and security.

Thirdly, China has always supported the goal of achieving a comprehensive nuclear-weapon-test ban within the framework of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. In 1993, at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the Chinese delegation, on the basis of this position, joined in the adoption by consensus, of General Assembly resolution 48/70, on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. China has, with a positive and constructive attitude, participated in the relevant negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and has been working hard for the conclusion, not later than in 1996, of a good comprehensive test-ban treaty, a treaty that fulfils the requirements of resolution 48/70 and the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban of the Conference on Disarmament.

I wish also to point out at this juncture that the comprehensive test-ban treaty will be an important step towards the ultimate objective of a complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and the treaty will be of indefinite effect.

For this reason, we must attach importance in our negotiations to the quality of the comprehensive test-ban treaty. The Chinese delegation believes that the comprehensive test-ban treaty should be able to ensure equality among all future States parties, benefit from universal participation and have a clearly defined scope of prohibition and an effective, fair and rational verification regime. For this purpose the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva must intensify its negotiations and strive to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty as soon as possible, and not later than 1996, in keeping with the relevant decision of the Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Chinese delegation is of the view that it would be difficult and unnecessary to foretell the exact date of next year's conclusion of the Treaty. As none of us is a fortune teller, it will be better for us to speed up our work rather than make good-hearted predictions.

I have once again explained the position of the Chinese delegation on the question of nuclear testing. My delegation is ready to proceed on the basis of such a position and to continue its exchange of views with other delegations for the purpose of increasing mutual understanding, so that every effort will be made to facilitate the work of the Committee in the spirit of consensus.

Mrs. Bourgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): Today, once again, several countries have expressed their concerns with regard to our new series of nuclear tests. I am not going to repeat the arguments put forward at earlier meetings regarding the legitimacy of our final series or its innocuousness. We have been clear about the step we have taken and our respect for our commitments. I would merely ask those who have, in varying degrees, criticized my country to back off a bit. When it comes to questions of nuclear tests, things should be viewed in the longer term. In a few months the fears that have been expressed will, in the nature of things, have faded away, and I am convinced that what the First Committee will remember will be France's overall approach, which is a cohesive albeit multifaceted whole, and which includes support for a speedy conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, testing, and a clear decision in favour of the zero option. That approach will lead to a decisive move towards the end of all nuclear testing, which is the wish of the vast majority of those here present.

It is in that connection that I should like to refer to the announced intention of some States to submit a draft resolution on the question of nuclear tests and to make an appeal to this Committee's wisdom. We have noted that the paragraphs of the Cartagena document in which the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries have set forth their views on this subject, strong and regrettable as they may be, are not couched in the extreme terms that a small number of delegations have employed, particularly here in this room. In the framework of our discussions it is important that the language employed at Cartagena not be exceeded by formulations I would describe as "emotional". I am therefore appealing to all countries, and to those that are above all our allies or partners, to refrain from the use of excessive language. Just as the expression of divergent views is normal, so violence and hostility are

incomprehensible and prejudicial to the serious nature of our work. We must all bear in mind that in the years to come we will be dealing with essential deadlines in regard to disarmament and non-proliferation. Let us therefore take care that, when treating a question that, with regard to my country, will soon be settled to everyone's satisfaction, we not open wounds that may take some time to heal. The urgency and importance of the work before us demands this. It is in this sense that I rely on the Committee's wisdom.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): It is unfortunate that our call for peace and non-proliferation in South Asia should have evoked a response from the representative of India which I could most charitably describe as intractable and very largely fictional.

We are happy to hear from the representative of India that there is no tension in South Asia. This is a region where nearly 2 million armed men are facing each other along the Indo-Pakistan border. There are 700,000 Indian troops deployed in occupied Kashmir, engaged in the suppression of the Kashmiri freedom struggle for self-determination. There are 800 Indian soldiers for every kilometre of the Line of Control — the cease-fire line — in Jammu and Kashmir. Daily, there is an exchange of fire along the Line of Control between the two forces. Indian forces have blockaded the Neelam Valley in Azad Kashmir, and 100,000 innocent people are without food and shelter as the winter approaches and have to be supplied by air. Indian and Pakistani forces are deployed on the Siachen Glacier in what has been called "the conflict on the roof of the world".

We are also happy to hear that India is prepared for talks with Pakistan on all issues, including Kashmir. But in the same breath the representative of India calls this "the so-called dispute over Kashmir". We are used to such double-talk. We have experienced it in seven rounds of bilateral talks at the Foreign-Secretary level, which Pakistan had initiated. Jammu and Kashmir is a recognized dispute between the two countries. The resolutions of the Security Council call for a plebiscite to enable the Kashmiri people to determine their own future through a free and fair plebiscite under United Nations auspices. Kashmir is on the Security Council agenda. Kashmir is shown as a disputed territory on the United Nations maps. The oldest United Nations peace-keeping force of all, the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), is deployed along the Line of Control in Kashmir.

At the last round of talks with India, the Indian Foreign Secretary stated that India had the right to use as much force as is necessary to suppress the Kashmiri struggle. This, we submit, is not the way to resolve problems. India has indeed sent us six "non-papers", but Pakistan had before that presented two "non-papers". We ask the representative of India: Is India prepared to discuss all eight papers proposed by the two countries? If India is prepared, it would be possible to resume the dialogue.

I was saddened to hear the representative of India dismiss discussion of non-proliferation in South Asia. This is a matter which concerns the destiny of more than one billion people on the subcontinent.

We hope that South Asia will also join other regions of the world where denuclearization has been achieved. Pakistan has made several proposals. Not one of them has been accepted by India.

It is our hope that, at the very least, India would be prepared to enter into the talks which have been proposed by the United States to discuss security and non-proliferation in South Asia. As we understand it, these multilateral talks were suggested in order to accommodate India's objection to regional discussions on the denuclearization issue.

India is participating in the Middle East peace talks. Why does it shy away from similar talks on South Asia? We urge India to reconsider its position and vote for peace and for non-proliferation in South Asia.

Organization of work

The Chairman: I would like, as Chairman, to make a statement on the programme of work in the days ahead. This is very important because we are soon to begin the second phase of our work, the consideration of draft resolutions. The Chair has, however, been informed that no interpretation services will be available after 6.30 p.m. this afternoon. With the concurrence of the Committee I shall make my statement at the next meeting.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.